FLORIDA 2000: BUSH WINS AGAIN! EINER ELHAUGE

the weekly Standard

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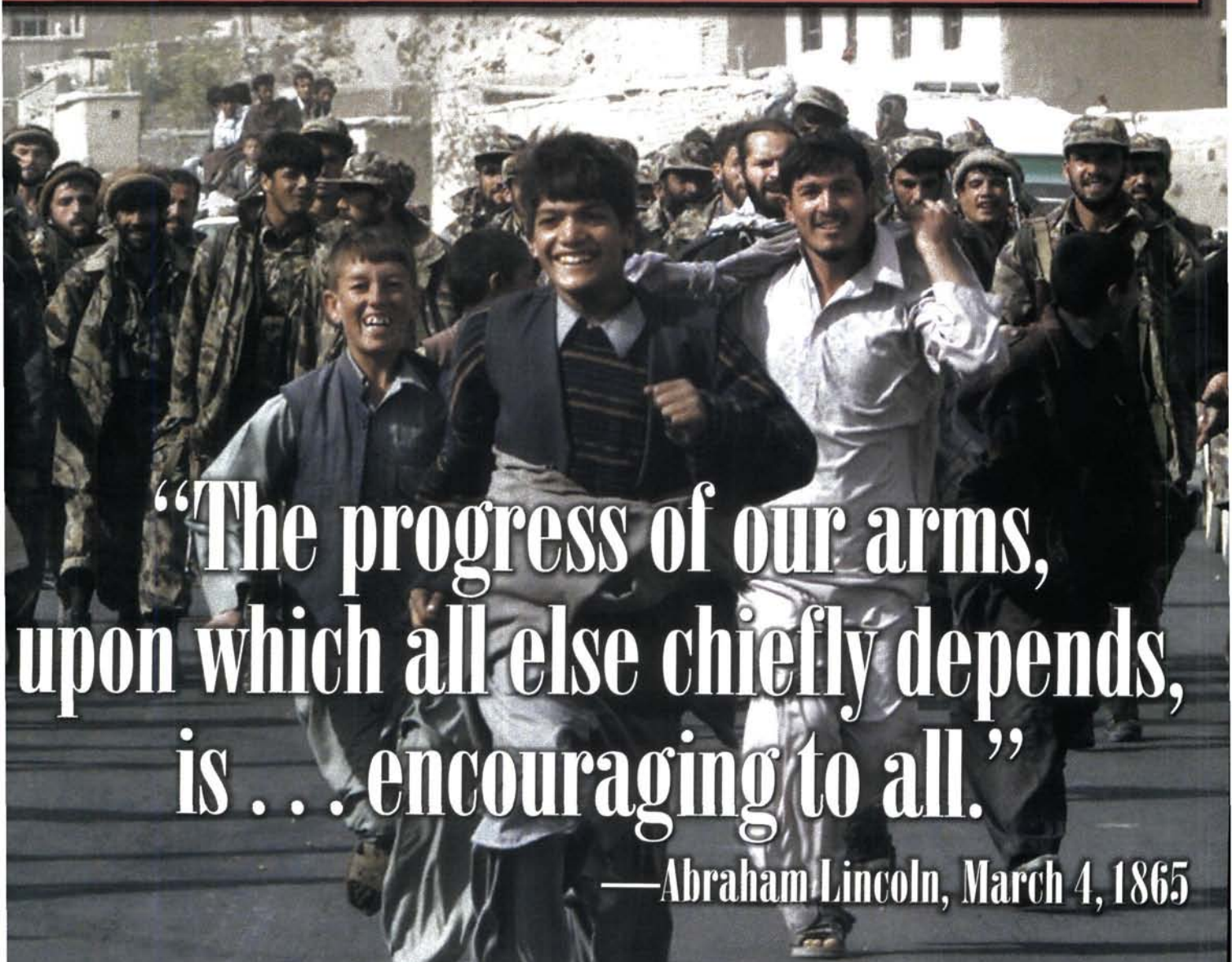

"The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is . . . encouraging to all."

—Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1865

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Give Victory a Chance CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL
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'A Tale of Two Cities'

Countless millions who love their country think of America as a miracle in itself. So saying –

In Taliquan, on the road to Kabul, Afghanistan, war left its unwelcome calling card. There was destruction, fire. There were deaths bred of conflict. There was hunger, strife's heartless twin.

Tucked away in that town, its citizens knew well the building serving as the Taliban's headquarters. Guns and ammunition were secreted within it. Friendly rebel forces, the United States and its allies knew all about this too.

Clustered around the headquarters, were houses sheltering citizens, fallen victims to the obliteration of their homes. They looked on without hope.

Suddenly, upon this awful scene, appeared a large company of firemen. The gathering throng, growing ever larger, looked on in surprise. The people had never seen their like before. Who were they?

Their uniforms looked standard but obviously professional, unlike what most people there had ever seen before. Big black letters against a field of white fronted their helmets. The letters read 'FDNY.'

"Who are you?" asked one in the crowd. "Where do you come from?"

"We're from the New York Fire Department," replied a chief.

"But you're thousands of miles away from home. What are you doing here in Taliquan, Afghanistan. Why are you here?"

"Because we care," the fire chief replied. "We're really even further away. We came from heaven. We died saving others at New York's World Trade Center. We've learned a lot. We're here to help."

The news spread quickly even to neighboring villages in the path of the retreating Talibans. The crowd pressed closer to the American firemen working with precision and to good effect.

"But you're all dead," shouted someone.

"In a manner of speaking, yes we are." The fire chieftain told them. "But, miraculously, we are not," said he. "We've come to you from America via heaven."

Now, the vast assembly understood. The American firemen had been dispatched by their God in response to the anguished call from their God. Like the noise of approaching thunder, the multitude cried out in one voice, "Praise Allah! Bless your God!"

Just then, another surprise stirred the great gathering. There arrived a large company of police in their blue uniforms, brass buttons with a white badge pinned to their lapels, against a white background reading, in big black letters 'NYPD.'

"And who are you?" another in the crowd shouted.

In a fleeting moment of relative silence the answer came from a police captain. "We're from America too. We've come to help your police. We lost our lives on the same day at the same hour as did the firemen from America who have come to help. We are the New York Police."

Once again came the thunder from a thousand voices calling out, "Praise Allah! Bless your God."

Soon the soaring flames were fading embers. An American fireman and policeman stood before the crowd, called for silence and said, "Tonight we gather in your town square. You're invited to a policeman and fireman's ball just like the ones in America. There's music, dancing, food and beverages all for you with our best wishes."

What followed is recorded history. The Talibans vanished. The Muslim millions grasped the hands of the Judeo-Christian American millions. A bond was born and even the seeds of a new-found love were sewn.

You tell yourselves all this can't become true. Then, how do you explain what's in another's small and hungry heart not nearly so famished as the huge one beating in America's breast that endlessly hungers to make room for just one more human being in harm's way.

EDWARD PATTERSON • 945 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, NY 10021

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the weekly Standard

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Stamp of Approval

After 5,000 Americans were killed by Islamic terrorists, one would assume that image-conscious homefront Islamic organizations like the American Muslim Council would find time in their busy schedules to denounce overseas Islamic governments that have abetted terrorism, while policing their own ranks for extremists. But one would assume wrong.

The American Muslim Council, for instance, has bestirred itself to repudiate terrorism only in general terms. (By *Boston Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby's reckoning, a feeble October 30 statement from the Muslim Public Affairs Council chiding the Taliban for its continued embrace of al Qaeda is the farthest any of the main American Muslim organizations has gone toward denouncing terrorists by name.) Before last week, the AMC had reserved its strongest and most specific words, instead, for Rep. John Cooksey (who indelicately warned airline passengers to be on the lookout for anyone wearing "a diaper on his head") and the nameless Pentagon bureaucrat who proposed naming the Afghanistan campaign "Operation Infinite Justice." This last, explained AMC executive director Aly Abuzaakouk, was "offensive to some in the Muslim community."

Now the AMC has found an even bigger crusade, if you'll pardon the expression. To wit: mau-mauing the U.S. Postal Service into more vigorously promoting a stamp honoring Islam. Kwanzaa and Daffy Duck have commemorative stamps, after all. Why shouldn't the prophet Muhammad?

After a five-year lobbying effort by American Muslims, an "Eid stamp"—celebrating the Islamic calendar's two most important festivals, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha—went on sale at post offices across the country on September 1. Unfortunately, ten days later that . . . *thing* happened. And suddenly the big blue stamp with Arabic writing became almost as unpopular with postal customers as leaky envelopes with scary block writing.

September 11, Abuzaakouk tells the *Kansas City Star*, with no apparent consciousness of his own vulgarity, "has become a catastrophe for the stamps, too." So the AMC has sent out an action alert to its members urging them to buy extra Eid commemoratives, since the stamp must be reissued three times in order for it to become a permanent fixture in the United States Holiday Collection. The battle is being fought on many fronts. When the Postal Service recently distributed advertising posters for its holiday stamps—and the Eid stamp wasn't on them—the AMC flooded USPS headquarters with angry letters. And it worked. Hat in hand, the postmaster general issued a press release confirming that his agency is "proud to feature the Eid stamp . . . in recognition of the many outstanding contributions of the Muslim community here in the United States and throughout the world."

In the midst of this tolerance explosion, the American Muslim Council might seem a bit out of place. Before the organization became the purported moderate face of Islam, its officials were busy—on various undeniable, on-the-record occasions—expressing sympathy for the 1993 World Trade Center bombers and support for terrorist outfits like Hamas and Hezbollah. But, hey: That stuff happened, you know, more than two months ago, and perhaps it's time to let bygones be bygones. It's the holiday season, after all.

Especially open-minded SCRAPBOOK readers may wish to follow the example of Rep. Tom Davis, who has no fewer than six mosques in his Virginia congressional district and who last year, when the Postal Service's Eid stamp was being unveiled, let loose this little beauty of confused ecumenical spirit: "This stamp is an appropriate symbol of the values American Muslims represent. I look forward to buying a whole sheet of them and sending them on my Christmas cards." ♦

Nattering Nabobs of Negativism

According to a Gallup poll released last Wednesday, the media are the big losers so far in the war for public approval. George W. Bush's approval rating stood at 89 percent, followed by Secretary of State Colin Powell at 87, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at 80, Attorney General John Ashcroft at 77, the United States Postal Service at 77, and Vice President Dick Cheney at 75. The news media brought up the rear with a 43 percent approval and 54 percent disapproval rating.

Perhaps it was the indignity of trailing the Post Office that explains why Dick Cheney, like vice presidents before him, thought it was an opportune moment to go after the 43 percentcenters—"the Washington press" and "all of the pundits" and "the talking heads in Washington" and these "handwringers" who were saying "a week or two ago" that "it's not going to work; you're not doing enough; you've been at it now for three or four weeks, and my gosh, the war is not over yet." Those who had raised such concerns, Cheney said, were "just dead wrong."

It was a good applause line for his

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Chamber of Commerce audience, but as attacks on the media go, Cheney was dropping dumb bombs.

In fact, the Northern Alliance's string of victories—as they acknowledged—came thanks to the Bush administration's decision to change course in late October, ratchet up the bombing of Taliban front lines, and send in more Special Forces. This happened because the administration realized, to paraphrase Cheney, that they had been at it for a few weeks, that the Taliban wasn't toppling, the Pashtuns weren't defecting, and, my gosh, the administration strategy up till then had been—well, "just dead wrong." ♦

Rove ♥ Grover?

So what, really, is the feeling in the White House about that embarrassing post-attack meeting featuring President Bush and leaders of American Muslim groups who, as it turned out, had been less than unequivocal in rejecting terrorism?

The president's September 26 photo-op became the focus of some discussion after THE SCRAPBOOK and others reported that several representatives of the groups present had refused to denounce terrorism, and in some cases, have even embraced it. Soon enough, the *New Republic*'s Frank Foer was reporting that top Bush adviser Karl Rove, confronted by a conservative activist about the Muslim leaders, had claimed ignorance: "I wish I had known before the event took place," he reportedly said.

Rove didn't know about the unsavory past of the White House guests, Foer suggested, because Grover Norquist hadn't told him. Norquist, who fancies himself a coalition-builder extraordinaire, has long plotted to bring American Muslims into the GOP fold and is widely believed to have helped coordinate the Sept. 26 event for the White House. Foer's reporting suggested that Rove was unhappy with Norquist.

But last week, a UPI wire story had Rove smacking down such "rumors" when he "appeared to go out of his way to embrace" Norquist at a dinner for the American Alternative Foundation, the former proprietor of the *American Spectator*. According to UPI, Rove signaled his continued affection for Norquist by "hugging him as they greeted at the pre-dinner cocktail party and singling him out for praise several times during his keynote address."

It's odd to see a general service news source like UPI reporting such intra-party arcana as the current Norquist-ometer reading in West Wing offices. THE SCRAPBOOK can confirm that Rove did in fact mention Norquist in his speech (though not several times), praising him for years of work advancing conservative ideas. If he is unhappy with Norquist, it looks like Rove isn't going to let on publicly. ♦

About that Parody

This week's Parody was first read last week at a roast in honor of a sometime and distinguished contributor to these pages, Robert D. Novak, who, we are pleased to say, received this year's National Press Club Fourth Estate Award for lifetime achievement in journalism. ♦

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Casual

Bush Country

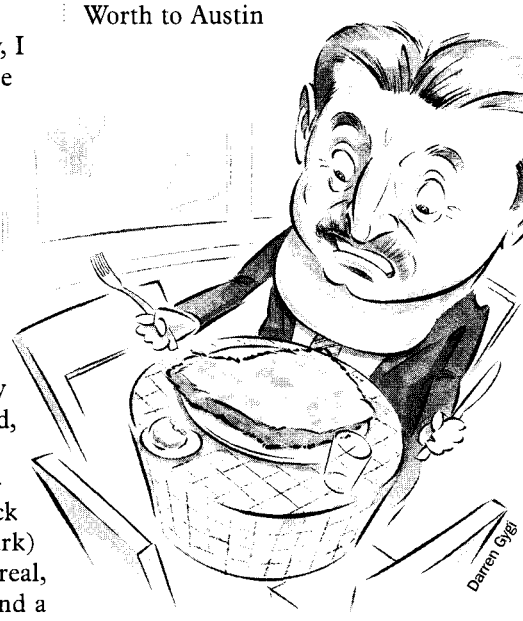
George W. Bush once ate a hamburger here at the Coffee Station in Crawford, Texas. I know that because on your left as you enter, at eye height, is a framed bill from this past August that Bush himself paid. It's bill #173803, and it lists orders for eight people. Bush paid $35—plus half that again in tip, according to the owner, Kirk Baird. Also on the wall is a framed letter from Bush. At the bottom, in his own hand, the president wrote: "The burgers are great!"

I'll bet they are. Unfortunately, I had time in Crawford for only one meal. The menu made my choice tough, offering all sorts of sandwiches, plates of chicken cooked every which way, and plenty of steaks: T-bones, rib eyes, and sirloins. I ordered chicken-fried steak, not the half portion, which my doctor would have recommended (actually, he would have told me to just say no), but the whole thing. It arrived, taking up more than half a big plate, and lying, as all good chicken-fried steak should, under a thick spread of cream (light, not dark) gravy. With mashed potatoes (real, with chunks) and green beans, and a huge glass of iced tea, constantly refilled, this was some meal.

I was in Crawford a few days before the president took Vladimir Putin to his ranch to do some summitry. The ranch is about eight miles northwest of Crawford, which is the furthest town west in McLennan County, and I can see why the president decided to make it his new home.

It's not just the food around here. It's also the isolation. When the Bushes began looking for a ranch a few years ago, they said they wanted "a rural retreat." It's hard to get more rural than the 1,600 acres they bought in 1999 for a reported $1.3 million. Crawford is the closest town, and with a population of 705 it is no metropolis. Valley Mills (pop. 1,085) is about nine miles north of Crawford, and McGregor (pop. 4,754) about seven miles south. Thirteen miles west there's Coryell City (pop. 125).

Crawford is the town you're most likely to drive through if you're going to the ranch. It's twenty-one miles west of Waco (pop. 104,706), which is on the interstate that connects Dallas/Fort Worth to Austin and San Antonio. Waco has an airport that people fly into before driving to Crawford.



Established in the 1850s, Crawford was named, though this is still in dispute, after a man who graded a river crossing. Its downtown, so to speak, lies at the intersection of Highway 317 and Farm Road 185. It includes a barber shop, two "antique" stores, the post office, a gas station, and a Bottlinger grain elevator. The Coffee Station, right on the intersection, is the only sit-down eatery, though take-out pizza is available from a house trailer with a Pizza Hut sign.

There's no place to stay in Crawford—you have to go to Valley Mills or McGregor. And there's little to do—though if it's fall you can catch some football, which here, as elsewhere in Texas, is big. (Even seventh-grade games make the local papers.) To see a movie, you have to go to Waco or maybe Clifton, in Bosque County, which has a *Last Picture Show*-type theater called the Cliftex. As for saloons and such, I think the counsel that Putin aides gave Kremlin reporters last week constitutes an adequate travel guide: "Spirits are not sold practically anywhere in town." When Bush is at the ranch, the press stays in Waco and comes out when events demand.

Bush is quite at home on his ranch, far from the crowds of Washington. But he's not been a hermit. He's shown up for a number of local events and given money to the school system. Last week, he took Putin to Crawford High for a Q&A with students. Crawford has a Democratic mayor, but it voted for Bush, and it's obvious Bush is well liked here. A sign atop the grain elevator says Crawford is "Bush country."

I'd say it's that, but in more ways than one. As a Dallas native, I can tell you that Texas divides into several parts, one of which is western. Bush, who spent many years in Midland, is a westerner, and Crawford lies at the beginning of the west. You can see that as you approach Crawford from the east. The flat, black, waxy soil—great for cotton farming—gives way to a more varied terrain whose surfaces are rocky and more often than not commanded by cows and goats and horses.

Bush's ranch has rolling hills and creeks and cliffs and even some caves (probably not much like those in Afghanistan). It's full of scrub brush, and it demands, I would imagine, a lot of work. I didn't get to see it—security waved me on. My consolation prize, a considerable one indeed, was that chicken-fried steak. As Bush might say, "It is great!"

Terry Eastland

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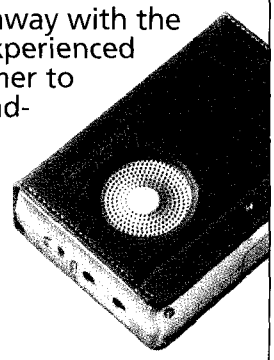

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The Best Defense

In the wake of the slaughter of 5,000 people on Sept. 11, drawing a distinction between the essential and the trivial is, as Michael S. Greve correctly notes, the first order of business for the nation ("Washington Goes to War," Nov. 12).

Contemplating what form future terrorist strikes will take is not pleasant, but necessary. A contingency we must prepare for is attack by ballistic missiles.

Yet the administration's plan to construct an emergency missile defense system—set for operation as early as 2004—is being challenged by special interest groups more interested in environmental correctness than national security. Two weeks before the terrorist attacks, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Greenpeace, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and an array of smaller environmental and arms control groups sued the Pentagon, demanding that it prepare a new environmental impact statement before beginning work on a missile test range in the North Pacific. In a complaint filed with the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the groups argue, among other things, that the program's Alaska-based launch facility "is located in a relatively untouched environment that provides habitat for endangered and threatened species." Performing test launches "could disrupt unique and pristine ecosystems," and new missile tracking radar would "emit hazardous electromagnetic radiation."

All of this would be laughable, but producing a new environmental impact statement (one was already prepared during the Clinton administration) could delay launch of the missile defense system by at least a year.

Bonner R. Cohen
Senior fellow, Lexington Institute
Arlington, VA

High-Flying President

In an otherwise fine article ("The Age of Conflict," Nov. 5), David Brooks mentions that, before being elected president, neither Bill Clinton nor George W. Bush "had performed much in the way of military service." This is a grossly inappropriate attempt at equivalence of the sort vigorously advanced by the Gore campaign in the 2000 election.

George W. Bush flew jet fighter planes in the Texas Air National Guard. One is not granted permission to fly a fighter jet unless he has (a) completed basic training, (b) completed flight school, and (c) become a commissioned officer. Bill Clinton . . . well, we know what he did and didn't do.

In his eight years as commander in chief, Clinton never learned how to properly salute the Marine guard as he entered and exited Marine One. His smug, dismissive wave revealed, I believe, his incredulity that anyone with a brain would join the Marines, or earn his living standing around all day in a silly uniform, or, if necessary, give his life to protect our president and our country.

John E. Bell
Clayton, MO

P.C. Police, Post-Attack

Christopher Caldwell should not feel alone in his desire to police his surroundings ("Casual," Nov. 12). A week after the Sept. 11 tragedy I had to go to the hospital for testing before some minor surgery. The Ambulatory Surgical Center is located on the North Shore of Long Island and is frequented by some of the most politically correct, liberal citizens one would ever hope to find. The waiting area houses a newly constructed, plush entertainment section with deep sofas and easy chairs, a television tuned to CNN, and a coffee and hot chocolate bar. Next to this is the older waiting area near the door, without a television and with a mix-match of stiff upright chairs and a few back issues of *Time*.

When I arrived, every single chair in the old, uncomfortable section was taken. There were even a few men standing. I thought the hospital was tremendously busy, but when I entered the room I saw only one man sitting in the new waiting area. He resembled every headshot on the "Most Wanted Terrorists" list that had just been released by the president. Dressed entirely in black, he was wearing a fanny pack which, I was later assured by the woman next to me, must be "filled with anthrax." I was no renegade. I sat with the others on the worn Naugahyde and kept one eye on the door. When they called his name, he calmly stood and walked by each of us and was greeted by a nurse assisting his elderly mother, whom he gently helped into his Lexus. They drove away. No one had the heart to move to the other waiting area for fear of seeming politically incorrect.

Gina M. Maisano
Locust Valley, NY

Churchill's Ghost

There was glorious irony in the tribute paid by the German destroyer *Lutjens* to the USS *Winston Churchill*, named for Britain's magnificent prime minister during WWII (The Scrapbook, Nov. 12). During WWII, Admiral Gunther Lutjens commanded the battle group Bismarck, which was led by the world's greatest battleship at that time, and feared by the British Royal Navy because of its ability to sink at will the dwindling number of British freighters traversing the Atlantic—Britain's slender and terribly strained lifeline.

Churchill, who had been first lord of the admiralty during WWI, focused all of his concentration on sinking the Bismarck, a task made doubly difficult by that battle group's blowing up the famous battle cruiser HMS *Hood*, which left fewer than a dozen survivors from a crew of thousands.

After a difficult chase that even involved American patrol planes (despite the fact that we were officially neutral at the time), the British hounds finally brought down the wounded Kriegsmarine stag, and Lutjens, in the tradition of brave naval commanders, went down with his beloved ship.

Robert H. Tyrka Sr.
Guynn Oak, MD

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the weekly Standard

Give Victory a Chance

Last weekend, the Taliban controlled all of Afghanistan. This weekend, as we go to press, their last remnants are fighting for their lives under heavy American bombardment in two rapidly collapsing redoubts: Kunduz in the north and Kandahar in the south. Terrorist leaders of al Qaeda have been captured by rebel forces in some cases and killed from the air in others. These last include Osama bin Laden's top lieutenant, Muhammad Atef, most likely one of the planners of the September 11 attacks.

Everywhere that the Taliban's murderous hold has been broken, our allies—whether they're Turkic-speaking Uzbek fighters in the north or irate anti-Taliban Pashtun tribesmen in the south or urbane Herati professionals near the Iranian border—are greeted with tears of joy and dancing in the streets. Most heartening, reporters at the Afghan border have described a mammoth exodus of healthy young men into Pakistan. These are the "Afghan Arabs" and other fair-weather sympathizers of the Taliban, who dressed up their sadism as religion and inflicted it on the Afghan poor.

The leisurely pace at which America at first chose to fight this war gave rise to criticism—some of it in these pages. But now that the war is beginning to go so well, we should react in a way appropriate to a flexible people in an information-age conflict. We should rejoice with all the glee of an Afghan peasant suddenly freed of the worry that a gang of illiterate Islamogangstas with Saudi-bought Kalashnikovs who don't speak his language will stone his wife to death for sport.

The more usual reaction in the media, though, has been to assume that there must be something wrong with this picture. We're like a country that can't take "thank you" for an answer. CNN's Satinder Bindra emphasizes that "this war is far from over." The *New York Times*'s R.W. Apple warns of an excess of optimism that "made a lot of people"—in his set at least—"think about Vietnam." (Proving Vietnam a metaphor capacious enough to accommodate everything from quagmires to cakewalks.)

This pessimistic cast of mind, this scrounging scrupulosity, is evidence of a noble American habit of self-criticism. In general, however, it must not deflect us from the certitude that we are engaged in a war as unambiguously just as any in our history. And in particular, it must not degenerate into the lazy-minded habit of blaming America for things largely out of its control. Opponents of the war effort complained when reports emerged that 450 Taliban who took refuge in a mosque in Mazar-i-Sharif had been killed by troops linked to the Northern Alliance. That's not the way *we've* been fighting the war, but it's not a reason to stop pressing our advantage, either. Last Tuesday, the *New York Times* ran a series of spectacular photos by Tyler Hicks that appeared to show Northern Alliance fighters executing a Taliban captive. These photos should win a Pulitzer for Mr. Hicks; they should not win a reprieve from justice for the Taliban.

The same principles should hold true at home. We are in a particularly difficult stage of the war on the domestic front, during which complacency about terrorism can masquerade as vigilance about civil liberties. This attitude was out in force in the wake of President Bush's announcement that terrorists captured in Afghanistan could be tried by military tribunals.

Grandstanding politicians sought to make hay of the announcement by intentionally ignoring the fact that only foreign belligerents could be tried by these tribunals. Vermont senator Pat Leahy says the order "sends a message to the world that it is acceptable to hold secret trials and summary executions, without the possibility of judicial review." The only answer to that is that it is indeed acceptable when you're at war with people who have proved themselves willing to gaily end the lives of 5,000 innocents. Once you widow housewives in Long Island and orphan Little Leaguers in New Jersey, you forfeit the soapbox. If Senator Leahy has a means of assuring that trials of the September 11 killers won't drag on for years—during which time our captives will serve as trade bait for every hopeful hostage-taker in the world—we'd love to hear it.

USA Today is wrong to describe military tribunals as an "abandonment of the very principles the U.S. holds dear." The *New York Times* is not just wrong but constitutionally misinformed when it editorializes that "Mr. Bush has essentially discarded the rulebook of American justice." And the *Washington Post* misleads when it describes the president's critics as "ranging from the solidly liberal People for the American Way to conservative Rep. Robert L. Barr Jr. (R-GA)." Sorry—that's not a "range." That's one flaky organization and one flaky politician, fleeing in opposite directions from an American consensus that is sensible and rock solid.

—Christopher Caldwell, for the Editors

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What to Do Next

How to consolidate the victory in Afghanistan—and beyond. BY TOM DONNELLY

VICTORY IN AFGHANISTAN is in sight. The few remaining pockets of resistance have been isolated and the Taliban leadership can no longer control events. One-eyed Mullah Omar, Osama bin Laden, and their lieutenants are on the run, if they haven't already been captured or killed.

More than any attacks by the Northern Alliance, the precipitous collapse of the Taliban's army was caused principally by the increasing application of American military power and especially the shift from cautious strategic bombing to more intense and tactical strikes. Further, the Taliban's decision to defend a thin line throughout Afghanistan ensured that any breakthrough would quickly become a rout.

In military terms, how do we seize the moment?

The immediate task is to convert the many local successes of the Northern Alliance and the cracking of the Taliban coalition within Afghanistan into a larger victory. Remaining Taliban forces must be quickly defeated and disarmed; it is essential that we not let up, but continue exploiting the opportunities of an especially fluid battlefield. "The trick on this," as retired general Wesley Clark, NATO commander in the Kosovo war said, "is to go quickly. . . . Put the pressure on and let this organization crumble right now. Don't give it a chance to reform a defense; don't let the command and control be reestablished; don't let it be resupplied and re-equipped. Finish it now."

To be sure, finishing it now is a challenge. Last week the Northern Alliance could not keep up with the Taliban retreat, and now they have to consolidate their gains. Pacifying Kabul and preventing looting and atrocities by their undisciplined troops is just one of many such tasks. Another is refitting those forces for further advances. And it is up to the U.S. leadership to keep a close eye on them. Follow-up attacks by the Alliance—a confederation of mostly Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara tribesmen—in the largely Pashtun area of southern Afghanistan would complicate matters politically. Indeed, the Northern Alliance's seizure of Kabul, even after a warning from the Bush administration not to do so, gives the Alliance a valuable chip in any negotiations over the future of Afghanistan. Other Afghan warlords will try to follow their example.

It is essential that we not let up, but continue exploiting the opportunities of an especially fluid battlefield.

For the United States, simply keeping up with the pace of events, let alone getting in front and leading them, will require fast and powerful ground forces able to move over longer distances and secure fleeting objectives. U.S. and allied heliborne infantry, backed up by massive on-call air power (including attack helicopters) is ideally suited to this mission. So are special operations troops, but a larger force should be deployed as rapidly as possible. Even if, as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld declared, a long-term peacekeeping presence is "highly unlikely," a rapid deployment now would do much to set the terms of the peace.

Moreover, it is necessary now to free up special forces for any unfinished business in tracking down bin Laden, Mullah Omar, and other leaders of the Taliban and al Qaeda. These are the missions that special forces do best. Capturing and killing these charismatic enemies is a matter of some urgency; if they slip out of our grasp at the final moment, victory in Afghanistan will be incomplete, and the larger war on terrorism will be more difficult and complex.

The second task is to move as quickly as possible to stabilize the situation and shape a post-Taliban Afghanistan. Despite Rumsfeld's declaration, recent history in the Balkans reveals that the success of peacekeeping operations depends on American leadership and almost always on the presence—the long-term and large-scale presence—of U.S. troops. In Afghanistan, it is useful and desirable to recruit an ad hoc coalition of the willing that includes troops from Turkey and other majority-Muslim states, but it will be equally important to ensure that some nations do not take a front-line role; the inclusion of Russian troops, for example, would be a mistake. And a U.N. mandate would be welcome, but only as a vehicle for assuring widespread agreement on American strategic goals.

More important, the true test of American resolve in Afghanistan will be our staying power. While there will now be opportunity for economic, social, and judicial development, none of those can succeed without a foundation in the military power of a U.S.-led constabulary force. This has been the traditional role of great powers in Afghanistan and remains the role of today's "sole superpower." Indeed, it was our failure to stay engaged in the region after the Cold War that permitted the rise of the Taliban and turned Afghanistan into a safe harbor for terrorists. "Peacekeeping" and "nation-building" are tasks we do not want, but we avoid them at great risk to ourselves.

Tom Donnelly is deputy executive director of the Project for the New American Century.

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Yet even as we move to terminate the fighting in Afghanistan and create an enduring peace in the area, we must prepare for the next campaign. This is what President Bush referred to as "Phase Two" of the war.

"Phase Two" is a euphemism for Iraq. As the campaign in Afghanistan has progressed, a consensus has emerged that it is high time to remove Saddam Hussein from power. According to the polls, a large majority of Americans understand this, as do, increasingly, our friends abroad. In a remarkable column in the November 15 *Wall Street Journal*, Lord David Owen, former British foreign secretary and the frustrated first peace negotiator in the Balkan wars, wrote: "Now is the time to choose the next sequence of steps to counter international terrorists, destroy their safe havens, and suppress all state support. We cannot just stop with Afghanistan." He argued that "the next step must involve Iraq" and "to pretend that Iraq can be put to one side this winter while we deal with the Taliban and the al Qaeda network in Afghanistan is foolhardy."

As in Afghanistan, a campaign in Iraq will involve local opposition forces, the Kurds in the north and the Shi'a tribes in the south. Enemies of Saddam Hussein are plentiful inside Iraq. But as in Afghanistan, the Iraq campaign must be premised upon the certainty of an American-led military victory and a commitment to remain engaged. We know how to fight this battle—having been to the outskirts of Baghdad in 1991—but today's situation is more urgent. Once Saddam realizes we are coming, he will observe few restraints. He will attack Israel and his Arab neighbors and enlist every terrorist he can find. He will use whatever weapons of mass destruction he has. We must be swift, violent, and decisive.

Finally, the fight in Afghanistan shows us the need to rebuild, restore, and reform our armed forces to meet the needs of a chaotic world in chronic need of American military help. For more than a decade, we have allowed the force that won the Cold War to atrophy while sending it into combat ever more frequently.

Every arm of American military strength needs more muscle. To simply deal with its current missions—to complete the mission in Afghanistan and retain the capacity to win another large-scale war—the Army needs at least 50,000 more soldiers and perhaps $15 billion per year. The other services need proportionate boosts in budgets, weapons procurement, and manpower. Missile defense, too, is inadequately funded. And a "revolution in military affairs" is upon us: The American force needs not only new weapons but new thinking.

The post-Cold War decade was marked by a series of military moments, from Iraq in 1991 through Kosovo in 1999, where small amounts of American military force held the potential to make a huge difference. There have been victories, to be sure, but none has been as full as it might have been or needed to be. Another such moment stands before us in Afghanistan. ♦

Al Qaeda's Filipino Branch Office

What's to be done about the American hostages in the Philippines? BY VICTORINO MATUS

LAST MAY IN THE PHILIPPINES, a terrorist group with links to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network abducted 20 people from a hotel resort on Palawan island. Three of them were Americans. In June, one of the Americans, Guillermo Sobero of California, was blindfolded and led away with his hands tied. According to captured rebel Bashir Balahim, Sobero was crying and begging for his life. His last words were, "No, no, please, I beg of you."

With that, another rebel wielded a machete and chopped his head off. Sobero's remains were found last month. Last week, seven Filipino hostages were released, but the two remaining Americans, Kansas missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham, are still being held.

The terrorist group is called Abu Sayyaf ("bearer of the sword" in Arabic), and for the past few months it has been at war with the Philippine government. Abu Sayyaf's goal is the creation of an independent Muslim state on the country's southernmost islands. The government has refused to negotiate but has found itself outgunned and outmaneuvered. So last month, 26 American counterterrorism specialists and army officers visited the Philippines to evaluate the crisis. The assessment team stayed for only a week, and offered advice on how to deal with Abu Sayyaf. More than advice may be needed.

Abu Sayyaf first gained international attention in April 2000 by kidnapping 21 hostages, including 10 Western tourists, from a Malaysian diving resort. The hostages languished for nearly five months, until a Libyan intermediary paid the terrorists $25 million in ransom as a "gesture of goodwill."

The money was reportedly invested in weapons and high-speed gunboats. On May 27, with more firepower than ever, the Muslim rebels stormed the resort on Palawan. The Philippine government dispatched 5,000 soldiers to hunt them down on Basilan island, deep in the south.

Victorino Matus is an assistant managing editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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Hundreds of rebels were killed, but the hostages have yet to be rescued.

Retaliation for the horrific murder of the American hostage has, perhaps understandably, not yet made it to the top of anyone's to-do list in Washington. President Bush, who meets with Philippine president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo this week, has promised to increase military aid to the Philippines from $2 million to $19 million per year. And Abu Sayyaf's assets have been frozen. "We stand in solidarity with the Philippines" said Bush recently. "This is a global battle." But there's still no talk of an American military role in going after Abu Sayyaf. When one reporter asked Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld what exactly the assessment team was doing in the Philippines, Rumsfeld was vague:

"I think . . . the way to characterize it is that we were asked by the Philippine government . . . to have some American military people offer some advice and assessment as to the kind of problem that the Philippines have been faced with, and it's a serious problem for them. And as you point out, it's not an isolated cell, it's . . . connected to terrorists across the world. And I think that's probably the best way to characterize it."

The Philippines has indeed asked for American help. Use of air space as well as the former U.S. bases at Clark Air Field and Subic Bay has been granted, though it's not clear these will be used. "It's not being contemplated right now," a senior Bush administration official told me. When asked if we ought to send in the Marines to rescue the Americans, the official was not encouraging: "Right now, we are focused on training the Philippine army. They want to be trained. Imagine the shame of their not being able to go in and get their own hostages. . . . Plus, there could be a firefight—there are a lot of Muslim rebels there, and Americans could be killed."

Filipino Muslims, known as Moros, make up 5 percent of the predominantly Roman Catholic country. When the United States granted independence to the Philippines in 1946, the Moros, concentrated in the southern islands, hoped for autonomy. Instead, they were incorporated into the new republic. By the late 1960s, their Islamic separatist movement, spearheaded by the Moro National Liberation Front, had grown violent. But in 1986, the MNLF entered into peace talks with the new Aquino government.

Not all the Muslims were happy with this. In 1991, one hardline faction split off—the Abu Sayyaf. Its founder was an Islamic preacher, Abdurajak Janjalani. During the 1980s, Janjalani joined the mujahedeen in Afghanistan. Around 1990, he returned home to Basilan and began spreading the Islamofascist creed.

When officials traced Murad's links back, they came upon Muhammad Jamal Khalifa—the brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden.

The following year, Abu Sayyaf made its first violent attack on a military checkpoint. In the decade since, it has engaged in kidnappings (including of children and clergy), bombings, and assassinations.

In January 1995, Philippine authorities uncovered a plot to kill Pope John Paul II during his visit to that country. The plot had ties to Abu Sayyaf. One of the suspected terrorists was Abdul Hakim Murad, who also admitted his involvement in a plot to blow up a dozen American airliners. One of Murad's roommates was Ramzi Yousef—the terrorist who had helped plan the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 (and who is now serving a life term in a U.S. prison). When officials traced Murad's terrorist links back even further, they came upon Muhammad Jamal Khalifa—the brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden.

In the late 1980s, Khalifa came to the Philippines and befriended Janjalani. The stated purpose of his visit was to set up Islamic charities, including orphanages, clinics, and schools. But officials believe his real mission was to arm the Abu Sayyaf.

By 1995, Khalifa had left the Philippines. Three years later, his friend Janjalani was killed in a firefight with the army. Philippine officials believe the bin Laden connection may have ended at that point, as Abu Sayyaf in the aftermath of Janjalani's death splintered into factions, each vying to kidnap foreigners for lucrative ransoms.

And within each group, it is difficult to discern the leadership. One hostage from the Malaysian diving resort told NBC's *Dateline* that his captors were all taking drugs. "You could smell it sometimes. They were young people, and they were heavily armed. They had fights among themselves." Said another hostage, "They actually shot at each other. And there was absolutely no control."

Which is why President Arroyo calls the existing Abu Sayyaf "a money-crazed gang of criminals." *Philippine Daily Inquirer* columnist and *Arab News* senior editor Rasheed Abou-Alsamh told me that "the little sympathy Abu Sayyaf seemed to have within the Filipino Muslim community has evaporated in the past year and a half, especially after they executed so many of their victims."

At the same time, the Philippine army has stepped up its campaign. The number of Abu Sayyaf rebels has dwindled to roughly 450 armed men (at one point, the group supposedly had 2,000 members).

The tide may be turning against the Abu Sayyaf, but they still pose a threat to Americans abroad and to the stability of the Philippine government. Their two American hostages, the Burnhams, were described by the Filipino hostages released last week as "not just skinny, but bony." For them, the end of the al Qaeda outpost in the Philippines can't come too soon. ♦

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Preparing for Iraq

Is the State Department getting interested in taking on Saddam? BY ELI J. LAKE

IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS, the Bush administration has publicly signaled that a tougher Iraq policy may be on the horizon. For example, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said on November 8: "There is plenty of reason to watch Iraq, there is plenty of reason to make very clear to the Iraqis that the United States does not intend to let the Iraqis threaten their own people, threaten their neighbors, or threaten our interests by acquiring weapons of mass destruction."

But behind the scenes, the building blocks may also be falling into place for a more aggressive approach on Iraq. In the last month, the State Department and the National Security Council have quietly increased their contact with a variety of exiled Iraqi military commanders and encouraged them to work together to form a loose network.

The purpose of such a network varies depending on who is talking. State Department officials insist this is purely a political movement, similar in mission to the Iraqi National Congress. The exiled Iraqi generals say the group could serve as a viable catalyst for overthrowing Saddam Hussein. On the other hand, some administration hawks worry that the entire proposition is an effort to undermine the Iraqi National Congress's driving force, Ahmad Chalabi.

"The State Department is not in the business of developing a military network in exile," one Foggy Bottom official said in an interview last Thursday. "I'm not saying we're not encouraging it, but we are not in the business of doing military work." This official stresses there is "no military option" at this point.

Eli J. Lake is State Department correspondent for United Press International.

But don't tell that to the Iraqi generals. General Fawzi al-Shamari, a former Iraqi commander who rose to the rank of general during the Iran-Iraq war, says the opposition network he envisions could provide U.S. war planners with "all kinds of information about the makeup of the army." Not only does the general, who defected to the United States in 1986, promise information on troops, potential targets, and general conditions in the military he once helped lead; he says he has networks of potential defectors inside the ruling Baath party, the intelligence services, and the Republican Guard.

General Najib al-Salhi, a former chief of staff for Iraq's first mechanized division in the fifth corps, explained the criteria his organization is employing for the network. "Officers have to have a record of working against Saddam," he said. He stressed he would only be interested in high-ranking officers who have a track record of cooperating with the opposition.

Al-Salhi himself claims to have worked in secret against Saddam from 1979 until he left Iraq in 1995, soon after the Iraqi secret police sent him a videotape of a family member being raped. In an interview last week, he spoke in some detail about plans to launch an offensive in the south and the north simultaneously, relying in large part on disloyal officers he has known since he graduated from the Iraqi Military College.

Al-Salhi and al-Shamari both attended a workshop on November 1 and 2 in Washington at the Middle East Institute, the Arab-leaning think tank led by Edward Walker, a former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs. The session was titled "The future of the Iraqi Armed Forces after Saddam Hussein," and included about a dozen high-ranking former Iraqi military figures, including General Faris Hussein, a former Baath party military adviser who now lives in Saudi Arabia, and former Lt. Colonel Adil Jubori, also from Saudi Arabia. All told, four expatriates from Iraqi Kurdistan, another three from the Middle East, and two from Western Europe attended the private meetings. Also in attendance was Kenneth Pollack, the former National Security Council Iraq expert for President Clinton, and Michael Eisenstadt, who is now a consultant for U.S. Central Command in Florida, the theater of operations that includes Afghanistan and Iraq.

The workshop's organizer, David Mack, who worked closely at State with opposition figures in Iraq right after the Gulf War, said he was surprised the State Department processed the visas for the exiled Iraqis in light of the tight restrictions on foreign visits after September 11. Mack said he wanted the group to focus on the relationship between the

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armed forces and civilian authorities and the size of a post-Saddam armed forces, particularly looking at what arms an Iraqi army would need for defensive purposes.

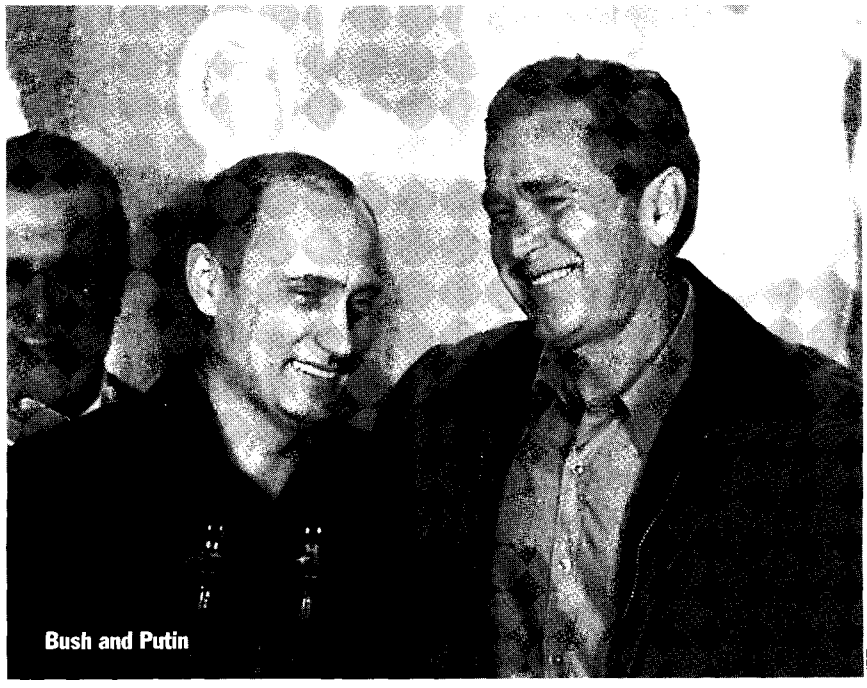
All of this sounds like the Bush administration is getting serious about Iraq, but that is not the opinion of Chalabi loyalists. "This sounds like more of the same from those who have been proven so wrong in the past," says Randy Scheunemann, an on-and-off consultant on Iraqi opposition activities for the Pentagon and former national security adviser to Senator Trent Lott. While on Lott's staff, Scheunemann authored the Iraq Liberation Act, which promised close to $100 million in military training for Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress. The only problem is that neither President Clinton nor President Bush has moved to fully implement the legislation. In fact, the diplomats have stalled even a modest plan to send INC information-collection teams into Iraq from neighboring Iran, doling out a bare-minimum budget for the group in five-month increments. A November 8 letter to the INC leadership in London from Ryan Crocker, the deputy assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, says specifically that "the Department of State is not prepared to fund INC activities inside Iraq at this time."

Indeed, many in the CIA as well as the State Department have long doubted that Chalabi and the INC are the ones to help eliminate Saddam. Whitley Bruner, a former CIA Middle East operations officer who has worked unofficially as a go-between with the Iraqi generals and the government, said last Tuesday that "the general thrust is to expand the circle and to develop the kinds of contacts the INC does not have: Baath, Sunni tribes, military, and security."

That perception is what worries Scheunemann. "This sounds like yet another destined-to-fail effort to cobble together yet another Iraqi opposition to avoid dealing with the INC," he says. Or is it a sign of a real determination to take on Saddam on the part of the Bush administration? ♦

Trust, But Verify

Putin may be friendly, but not towards the people of Chechnya. BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ



Bush and Putin

KRT

AMERICANS MAY ENJOY the spectacle of Russian president Vladimir Putin chowing down with President Bush in Crawford, Texas, and take comfort in the knowledge that the old standoff between two continent-sized foes has well and truly ended. But we still have reason for caution in dealing with Russia.

President Putin has striven to convince our leaders that the Russians have a special understanding of Islamic extremism. In making this case, Russians point to their conflict with the Chechens—those fractious, troublesome, Caucasian mountain folk, a few of whom reporters have detected in the ranks of Muslim volunteers fighting for the Taliban.

It is certainly true that Russia's relations with Muslims have been more intimate than ours, but they have not been benign. Russia has at least 20 million Muslims within its borders; and it has a long history of involvement with the former Soviet republics in Central Asia, now independent countries and our newfound allies. Since the days of the tsars, Moscow's role in the Islamic lands has been that of colonial conqueror, patron of geopolitical intrigue, and sometime architect of brutal repression. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, in other words, was no anomaly; it was the latest in a long series of eastward ventures. And if there is a Muslim people whose experience with the Russians has been exceptionally bitter, it is the Chechens.

Islam came late to Chechnya, in the 18th century, imported from the south by Sufi missionaries. From the north, meanwhile, tsarist armies seeking to expand the Russian empire seized the area from Persia. The Caucasian Muslims, led by Sufis, continued to resist the Russians for years

Stephen Schwartz is working on a book entitled The Two Faces of Islam.

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and defeated them in battle after battle. Although the area was eventually pacified, the Russians never forgot their humiliation. Almost a hundred years later, in 1944, Joseph Stalin, himself from the Caucasus but an intense Russian nationalist, worked revenge on the Chechens, deporting them en masse (low estimates of the number begin at 350,000) to the deserts of Kazakhstan.

This history helps explain the Chechens' restiveness under Russian rule. Beginning in the 1950s, the deportees were allowed to return to their homeland, but they remained outsiders in the eyes of Russians, who regarded them as "*chyorny*," or "blacks." And when communism began collapsing, the old conflict between Russians and Chechens reemerged, this time with a new pretext.

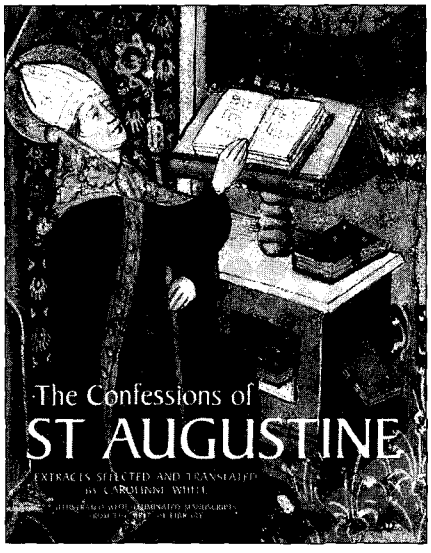
Moscow needed a cultural enemy, an "other" useful in mobilizing the masses behind the rulers at a time of economic chaos and profound uncertainty. In the past, the scapegoat had been the Jews, but attacking them was no longer possible. Muslims, especially Chechens, seemed to fill the bill. This, and this alone, explains the willingness of post-Communist leaders in Russia to commit blood and treasure—not to mention police provocation, disinformation, bribery, and the martyrdom of countless innocents—to wars in Chechnya. There is nothing Russia needs in Chechnya except a symbolic foe, a hereditary enemy to replace the Jews, Catholics, and Turks of the past.

Putin seems unable to walk away from this dance of death. Now, he is seeking to use the global anti-terror effort to gain American backing for Russia's continued occupation of Chechnya. And in this he is abetted by extremists from the Muslim world. Around 1996, agents of the Saudi-backed Wahhabi sect began flooding the Caucasus with preachers, money, and arms. Soon a man called Khattab, sometimes described as a Saudi and sometimes as a Jordanian, appeared on the scene, apparently an ally or agent of al Qaeda, sent from Afghanistan to try to do to Chechnya what Osama bin Laden and the Taliban were in the process of doing to that country.

The emergence of Wahhabism in the Caucasus split families and villages, as the ultrapuritans from Arabia agitated for adoption of *sharia* punishments, a ban on music, the covering of women, and above all the rejection of Sufism, the spiritual tradition that was the historic vessel of Caucasian resistance. This development fractured the Chechen national movement.

In 1999, Khattab and his Wah-

THE CONFESSIONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE



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habis launched incursions into neighboring Dagestan, which made resolution of the Chechen relationship with Russia ever more remote. In the past year, the Wahhabis have coldly assassinated many local Chechen leaders—low level state functionaries, Muslim clerics, and so on. The Russians disingenuously blame these killings on the anti-Wahhabi, pro-Western Chechen president, Aslan Maskhadov. For their part, a great many Russians and Chechens believe Putin's secret police, the KGB in new uniforms, work hand in glove with the Wahhabis to undermine the mainstream Chechen leadership.

Putin does not come to us with clean hands in dealing with Muslims, and in our new effort to gain Muslim allies and supporters Americans can only harm our cause by appearing to sign off on the continued mistreatment of a small, isolated people. For the sake of American credibility, the Bush administration should keep a close watch on Russian mischief in the Caucasus and should protest every abuse. At the same time, it should dramatically improve our relationship with mainstream, traditional Chechens—who have repeatedly offered us their help in beating bin Laden, help that we have scorned only to our detriment. ♦

The Rise and Fall of Enron

The good it did should not be interred with its bones. BY IRWIN M. STELZER

EVEN THE CASUAL READER of last week's financial news will know that Enron, the energy and trading company, has been acquired by its smaller rival, Dynegy. This is more than just another multi-billion dollar merger, which explains why liberals, who can ordinarily be expected to oppose any marriage of two large companies, are indulging in an ill-concealed chortle.

They are chortling not just because Enron has been unable to justify to investors some of its complicated financial transactions and now faces an S.E.C. investigation and a host of lawsuits. Rather, Enron's enemies are delighting in the downfall of a Houston company that was a big supporter of both Bush administrations. Ken Lay, Enron's chairman and the driving force in its transformation from a sleepy, regulated natural gas pipeline into what was until recently the nation's most admired energy company, contributed generously to George W. Bush's campaign, and was consulted by both the president and Vice President Dick Cheney when the administration was formulating its energy policy.

But there is a deeper level to this delight in Enron's misery. What could be more delicious than seeing a wealthy energy industry executive with conservative views laid low? Why, seeing the downfall of a conservative executive from Texas who, in addition to those disabilities, also led a revolution in two of the nation's key industries—electricity and gas—a revolution that replaced government regulation with effectively operating free markets.

Liberals such as *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman—an M.I.T. professor who once served with me (and WEEKLY STANDARD editor William Kristol) on an Enron advisory board assembled by Lay to keep him and his team up to date on general public policy trends—have always been uncomfortable with the rollback in government power that deregulation represents. They took the misbegotten version of deregulation that afflicted Californians with an electricity shortage, followed immediately by a glut, as proof that markets can't work. They are wrong, of course—witness the long-term decline in the prices of electricity and natural gas, where choice and competition have supplanted the local monopolies of yore.

But that is a debate for other articles. What Enron and Lay deserve to be remembered for is leading the fight for competition. This battle was waged in the halls of Congress, in state legislatures around the country, and in regulatory agencies on the federal, state, and local levels. It included efforts to loosen the stranglehold on electricity markets of incumbent utilities, who used their monopoly of transmission lines to beat back threats from independent generators. It included a struggle to allow military installations to buy energy from low bidders rather than be forced to buy from the utility serving their areas. And, perhaps most important, Enron fought to allow customers and suppliers to strike whatever bargains they found mutually advantageous, rather than be required to buy and sell energy through the monopolies that control transmission facilities. To say that Ken Lay evoked fear and loathing in establishment boardrooms is to understate the case considerably.

Along the way, Enron set up markets in which natural gas could be bought and sold, in which companies could hedge against extreme weather conditions, and in which customers such as shopping mall operators could hire Enron to assemble on their behalf packages that gave them heat, light, cooling, and conservation at

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minimum prices. In short, Enron created markets where none existed, and replaced monopoly with competition, reducing the need for regulation and thereby lowering the cost of energy for consumers and businesses.

In the process, it assembled a team of executives that quite naturally developed an "us vs. the establishment" attitude, which some took as just the sort of thing needed by entrepreneurial types setting out to revolutionize key industries, and others took as arrogance. With some justification: When then-CEO Jeff Skilling famously responded to a financial analyst's question by calling him an "assh—," it was reasonable for the offending questioner and his colleagues on Wall Street to assume that Enron did not have their approbation high on the list of the goals of its financial public relations program.

Whether Enron adopted financial techniques that are beyond the pale we will not know until the S.E.C. completes its investigation. We do know that it failed to explain those techniques fully and clearly to the analysts that follow the company, a crowd willing to suffer neglect and abuse when things are going well, but waiting to pounce at the first sign of trouble. As a consequence, when some of Enron's transactions turned sour, share prices fell, credit ratings followed suit, traders at other companies began to worry that Enron might not have the resources to back its end of trades in gas and electricity, and the rest, as they say, is history. Dynegy bought for some $10 billion a company the market had once valued at almost ten times that price, probably causing those who had bought into Enron in the early days of the Lay regime to forget that their investment, had they held it, had still quintupled in value.

Which brings us to Michael Milken, another financial revolutionary. In the 1980s, Milken transformed American industry as Ronald Reagan simultaneously transformed the American political scene, and as Enron would later transform the industries in which it became involved. By making substantial amounts of debt capital available to the large number of American companies with whom banks would not do business, Milken enabled a group of anti-establishment entrepreneurs—the so-called predators—to wrest control of sleepy companies from the corpocrats who felt little need to maximize the value of the assets that their shareholder-owners entrusted to their management. He thereby contributed mightily to converting American industry into a lean, mean, internationally competitive machine.

Ken Lay

AP / Wide World Photos

Just as Enron created a market for energy in the 1990s, Milken created a market for companies in the 1980s. Just as Milken attacked the financial system that protected entrenched managements, Enron attacked the regulatory system that protected electric and gas monopolies.

Whether in the course of his assault on the status quo Milken bent or broke some of the rules governing financial transactions is still being debated, with his defenders persuaded that his punishment for violating such rules was more the revenge of the establishment than the just deserts of a willful lawbreaker. Whatever one believes about the possible crimes and eventual punishment of Mike Milken, there can be no denying that the Milken-financed revolution turned many companies over to a breed of entrepreneurs forced to maximize efficiency in order to pay off the huge debts they incurred in acquiring control of their companies. Lean and hungry predators replaced fat cats, to the benefit of consumers and investors.

Enron's case is different, of course. For one thing, there is as yet no indication that the mistakes—among them expensive failures in new ventures and in some overseas projects—were other than honest ones, or that investors were deliberately kept in the dark or misled about the company's finances. A generation of lawyers will very likely get rich as the government and private litigants seek to discover whether Enron sailed close to or over the line.

But, like Milken, Enron did challenge and defeat the establishment. Many utility executives, their cozy monopolies now destroyed or under threat, will be glad to see Enron gone, and with it an anti-regulatory culture of innovation, daring, and swagger. Liberal commentators, who see every shrinkage of government power as a threat to their control over the lives and fortunes of the consumers they deem too lazy or stupid to protect their own interests, will call for re-regulation. But they will be hard put to prove that Enron's absorption by a competitor—especially by one that seems interested in maintaining and expanding the free markets fostered by Enron to replace the vertically integrated monopolies that had dominated the energy business—requires a reversal of the deregulation revolution. Enron made mistakes, but creating competitive markets was not one of them. ♦

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Red Letter Day

September 11 may turn out to have been very bad for Communist China. BY GORDON G. CHANG

WILL THE People's Republic of China prove to be one more victim of September 11? Today, the Chinese state may look like an inadvertent beneficiary of the terrorists' crime, but on closer inspection, it could turn out that China's economic, social, and political institutions are about to be tested as never before.

In the aftermath of the suicide attacks, China's leaders believed that their past links to rogue states and terrorist organizations, once an embarrassment, would be a definite plus. As Washington prosecutes the worldwide war against terrorism, it wants access to secrets kept in unmarked drawers in the Chinese capital.

Beijing might still get something in return for such information, but it looks as if it won't get much. In September, the Chinese Foreign Ministry tried to set a price for China's assistance, indicating that Washington would have to cooperate with China's attempts to subdue the "separatists"—the Taiwanese, the Tibetans, and the Uighurs. Washington, however, has signaled that it won't play Beijing's game. In Shanghai in October, President Bush said the fight against terrorists "must never be an excuse to persecute minorities."

China needs all the help it can get. Its state-owned enterprises, the backbone of its heavy industry, are still ailing after 25 years of reform. The central government has tinkered with their structure, but they are still uncompetitive. The Communist party avoids the one change that could save them: loosening the control of the party itself. Until it takes that step, these enterprises cannot adapt to market conditions in time to meet competitive challenges. The world's favorite Communist leader, Premier Zhu Rongji, says he has "basically solved" the problems of the state enterprises, but that's nonsense. These enterprises are unprofitable and essentially unreformable.

The story is much the same for the state-owned banks, which include some of the weakest financial institutions in the world. Insolvent and backward, they are kept afloat by the central government, which cannot afford to let them fail.

In September, the Chinese Foreign Ministry tried to set a price for China's assistance, indicating that Washington would have to cooperate with China's attempts to subdue the "separatists."

Chinese agriculture, too, in the past few years has been failing, and the central government's policies have left hundreds of millions of peasants without a decent income. Experts predict that domestic rice soon will be unable to compete with foreign brands in Chinese stores.

Even the gleaming parts of the economy, such as the financial center of Shanghai and the new information technology zones, have yet to become self-sustaining. They are all products of centrally directed development and never-ending subsidies, the strategies that landed China in a huge mess in the first place.

In fact, the only thing keeping the economy going is massive fiscal stimulus. This means that China has more highways, dams, and railroads, but also ever-increasing budget deficits. Government spending is inefficient, and it has failed to jump-start the economy. What the planners have created instead is a new problem: The economy is addicted to central government funding. Many of China's own economists say pump-priming must end soon, for the country's financial condition is deteriorating—especially if Beijing's hidden obligations, such as indirect loans and unfunded pensions, are added to the books. The technocrats are running out of money and time. They have perhaps five years to right the economy.

This is because peasants and workers are impatient. They're not about to wait decades more to see if centrally directed policies will finally work. And so we are seeing the unrest that always precedes the end of a regime. In 1998 there were about 60,000 protests, according to China's Ministry of Public Security; in 1999 there were 100,000. We don't have any statistics for 2000, but we know anecdotally that the demonstrations have gotten larger. Twenty thousand mine workers and several thousand relatives rioted in Liaoning Province in February 2000. Twenty thousand peasants tore down the homes of corrupt officials in Jiangxi Province the following August. The most frightening aspect of recent demonstrations, however, is the desperation of the protesters. These days, peasants and workers battle the security forces barehanded even when those forces are armed.

The top leaders of the Communist party think that accession to the World Trade Organization can solve their economic and social problems. The hope is that increased exports and more foreign investment will save the People's Republic. That hope is misplaced, however, and Beijing, in

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the first decade of the 21st century, has finally run out of luck.

This summer it was clear that economies in North America, Western Europe, and even Asia were headed into recession. Nonetheless, most economists predicted only a brief disruption to economic growth. Since September 11, however, we've seen perhaps the worst downturn since the Great Depression. In October, China's leader, Jiang Zemin, said, "All this has made an already grave economic situation worse." Beijing's assessments of its economic prospects are getting steadily gloomier.

With the People's Republic entering the global trading body, multinationals will work hard to penetrate its markets. Around the world, consumers are consuming less. So these businesses will have to make up the shortfall somewhere, and the planet's only new source of buyers is China. Although multinationals may talk about increasing their foreign investment in the People's Republic, the reality is that they will use their idle capacity around the world to export to China. WTO accession makes that strategy feasible because tariffs will drop and internal barriers to trade will be eliminated.

On the other side of the equation, China's exports will continue to slump. WTO rules will prevent the People's Republic from offering all the generous subsidies that previously kept the export machine going. Meanwhile, as consumers pull back around the world, China's markets will dry up. Until now the People's Republic has done well with one-way trade, exporting much and importing relatively little. Now we will see if Beijing's political leadership can handle the effects of two-way trade in a rapidly worsening economic environment.

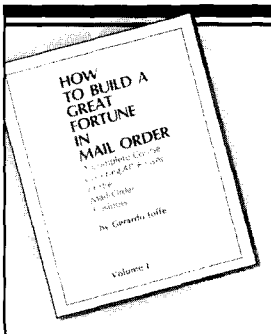
At the same time, the next few years will witness a major political transition. Beginning next year and continuing into 2003, almost all the top posts in the Communist party and the central government are supposed to change hands. Neither of the two prior transitions in Communist China's history went according to plan, and there's no indication that this one will be smoother. So when the challenges to China are greatest, the regime will be weakest.

In short, the coming years will witness the most difficult period in the history of the People's Republic. In the WTO era, many in China will hold the central government responsible for letting foreign businesses put Chinese out of work. When the economy fails, senior leaders in Beijing will be tempted to raise the flag of nationalism even higher to keep themselves in power, and that could mean acting even more belligerently toward Taiwan and maybe Japan. At the same time, the aggressive People's Liberation Army, a large power bloc within the Communist party, may well have more say than usual over China's foreign relations.

Beijing's leaders could miscalculate. They might reason that the United States, diverted by events in Central Asia, is in no position to counter a move by China on its borders. Hostilities would be over before Americans could arrive on the scene, they might think. That assessment would underestimate Washington's resolve and the will of the Taiwanese and Japanese populations to resist.

Already, even before China's economic failure has become manifest, General Zhang Wannian, a top PLA leader, said that war would be inevitable during the five-year period ending in 2005. He may mean what he says. Besides, whenever the economy does finally fail, war will be a tempting option for Beijing.

It would be difficult for China to win any conflict with Taiwan or Japan, even if America were distracted. Losing a war would surely spell the end for the People's Republic. September 11's biggest victim? Five years from now, it could well be China. ♦



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A Winning Strategy

How the Bush administration changed course and won the war in Afghanistan

By Robert Kagan & William Kristol

With the Taliban dislodged and Osama bin Laden increasingly shorn of allies, the endgame seems to be in sight in Afghanistan. President Bush—along with the men and women of our armed forces—deserve the lion's share of the credit for the encouraging progress of our arms. The president deserves special credit for passing one of the key tests of any commander in chief: He knew when to drop a failing strategy and try something different.

The turning point in the Afghan war, it is clear in retrospect, came near the end of October. That is when the United States finally sent B-52 bombers to begin carpet-bombing Taliban front-line troops arrayed in the north against the Northern Alliance. The first of these B-52 strikes were launched on October 30. The following week the forces of the Northern Alliance began advancing against Mazar-i-Sharif. On November 9, a mere ten days after the start of the carpet-bombing, that vital northern city fell, and the rout of the Taliban had begun.

This winning strategy—pushed hard by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld—was implemented only after another, very different strategy had begun to fail. The original strategy, promoted especially by State Department officials under Secretary of State Colin Powell, in cooperation with the CIA, was unenthusiastic about too rapid a military advance by the Northern Alliance against Taliban positions in the north and around Kabul, and was therefore not designed to aid such an advance.

From the very outset, even before the bombing began on October 7, there was a fundamental disagreement between the Pentagon and the State Department over how to manage the situation in Afghanistan. On September 26, the *Washington Post* reported an "ongoing debate" between the State Department and the Pentagon over the objective. Pentagon officials wanted to "ensure that the campaign ends with the ouster of the Taliban." But State Department officials argued the administration should "be cautious and focus on bin Laden and his al Qaeda network." Secretary Powell was reluctant to make the overthrow of the Taliban the stated objective of the war.

The State Department's position reflected concern for the sensitivities of the Pakistani government and its nervous president, General Pervez Musharraf. Pakistan had long supported the Taliban, and the government wanted a guarantee that some Taliban elements would have a share in any postwar government. The Pakistanis were also acutely hostile to the Northern Alliance and wanted to make sure that it would be kept out of a new government or would have at most a minimal role.

The State Department apparently won the first round in shaping the strategy. For the first month after the September 11 attack, American policy aimed not at supporting a rapid advance by Northern Alliance forces against Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, and Kabul, but at *holding off* any advances in the north while the State Department cobbled together an opposition coalition in Pashtun-dominated southern Afghanistan that was acceptable to Islamabad. The bombing that began on October 7, in addition to targeting Taliban air defense, air bases, and other military infrastructure, focused only on known or suspected al Qaeda bases and on Taliban headquarters. As Steven Mufson and Thomas Ricks have reported in the *Post*, in this first stage of the war, the administration "hoped for a rapid succession of events: pinprick airstrikes and a few raids by U.S. Special Forces might lead to substantial defections from the ruling Taliban, the rapid fall of major cities and, with a bit of luck, a final offensive that would 'smoke out' Osama bin Laden from Afghan caves."

Thus during the first weeks of the war the American

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airstrikes, for the most part, did not target Taliban troops. Administration officials told the *New York Times* that "attacks on the Taliban's front-line troops" were a "lower priority than efforts to strike at" the Taliban leadership and the al Qaeda network. In fact, as the *Times*'s John F. Burns reported, the bombing was "carefully calibrated to exclude the Taliban's lines north of Kabul."

Reuters / Yannis Behrakis

Liberated Kabul residents, November 13, 2001.

The military strategy conformed to Powell's political and diplomatic strategy. While airstrikes targeted the Taliban leadership structure, the State Department pursued what became known as the "southern strategy." State Department and CIA officials worked arduously to put together a Pashtun coalition acceptable to Pakistan. In the process, attempting to sweeten the pot, the State Department made a significant compromise regarding the future role of the Taliban. Secretary Powell, meeting with President Musharraf in the second week of October, agreed with the Pakistani president that "moderate" Taliban members might be able "to participate in developing a new Afghanistan." Despite this concession, however, no Pashtun coalition could be patched together. On October 15, the *Times*'s Michael Gordon reported that "the behind-the-scenes effort to organize a leadership that would replace Taliban leaders had made no discernible progress." CIA officials were making no headway organizing Pashtun factions in southern Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the CIA was not even working closely with many key figures in the Northern Alliance.

At about that time, senior American officials, especially at the Pentagon and at the National Security Council, began to worry that the war was not going well. The bombing was not bringing the Taliban to its knees. The United States was no closer to finding bin Laden. And efforts to put together a post-Taliban coalition government acceptable to Pakistan were getting nowhere. On October 12, the National Security Council completed a review of the situation. The review, which called for an accelerated effort to overthrow the Taliban, appears to have been a partial victory for Rumsfeld. Within days, American airstrikes intensified, and they included some scattered strikes against front-line Taliban troops in the north. But, as Gordon reported on October 17, the Taliban front-line forces still remained "largely exempt from the barrage of airstrikes."

The division between State and Defense appeared to be widening. According to the *Times*, Afghan opposition leaders reported hearing conflicting messages from the Americans. Defense officials were urging them to take "a free hand" in military action, but the State Department was "urging caution." Northern Alliance leaders also said that they were not receiving promised supplies and that coordination with the American military was limited. Rumsfeld publicly complained that the American relationship with the anti-Taliban forces was "still incomplete."

Rumsfeld's frustrations boiled over in public the next week. He complained about the limits of an air-only campaign. "There are things you can find from the air," he noted. "But you cannot really do sufficient damage" with air power alone. To be successful, Rumsfeld believed there had to be some land force to "crawl around on the ground and find people." And the *Times* reported that Rumsfeld was also privately expressing his "frustration" with the State Department and CIA's futile efforts to build a Pashtun resistance. Publicly, he complained, "We do not have the kinds of interaction with some elements in the south that I would have to have to see progress." That, he implied, was why it was so important to get some progress in the north.

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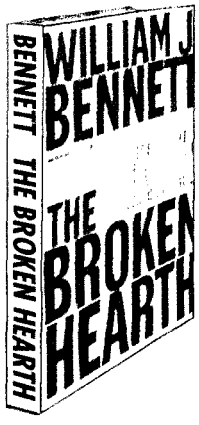

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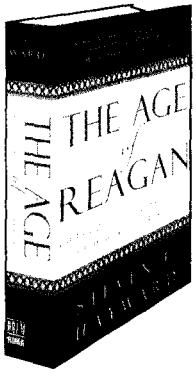

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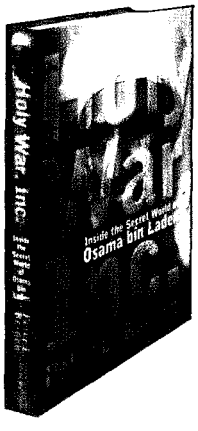

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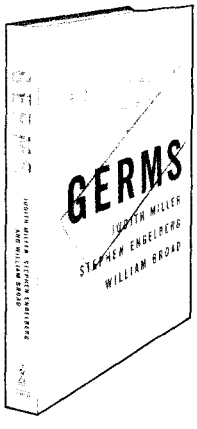

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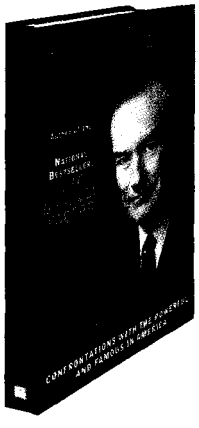

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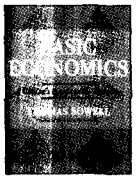

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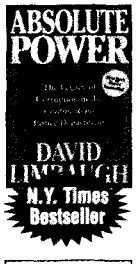

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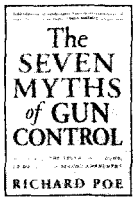

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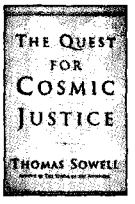

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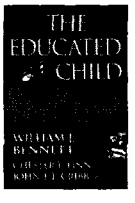

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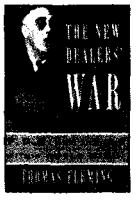

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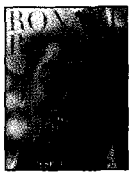

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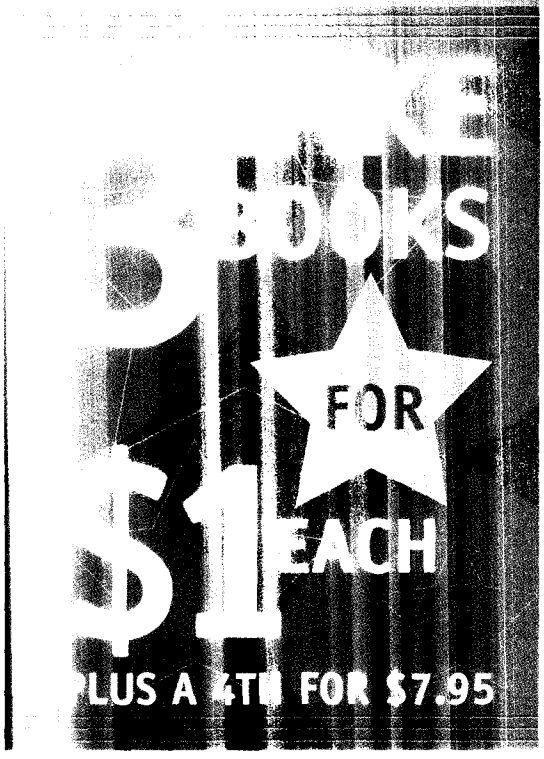

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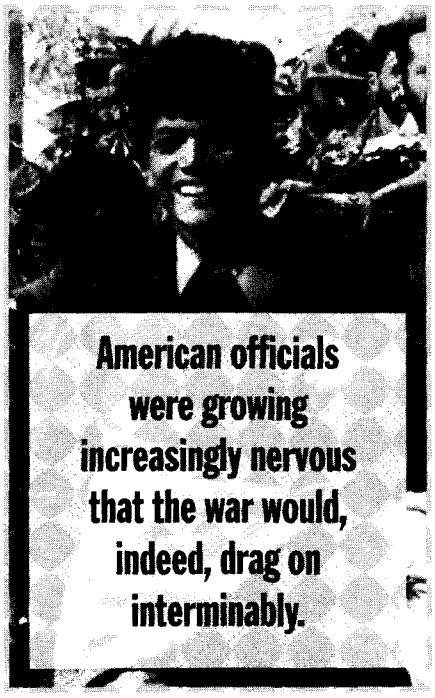
The first important sign of a shift in strategy may have come on October 18, when President Bush, on the eve of his trip to Shanghai, declared that American bombing attacks in Afghanistan were intended to pave the way for "friendly troops on the ground" to overthrow the Taliban leadership. The president's statement reflected Rumsfeld's preferred strategy. In retrospect, this appears to have been the moment when President Bush sided with his secretary of defense.

Rumsfeld did his best to exploit the opening provided by the president. On October 19 he announced that the United States was prepared to give direct military assistance to Afghan opposition forces aiming to attack Kabul and overthrow the Taliban. In an obvious effort to seize the initiative in the internal administration dispute, Rumsfeld offered a remarkably detailed, public checklist of what the United States would provide the Northern Alliance: "They're going to have some help in food, they're going to have some help in ammunition, they're going to have some help in air support and assistance." By October 21, Northern Alliance leaders were reporting the arrival, for the first time, of American Special Forces to coordinate the opposition's military actions with American airstrikes. The American goal now, Rumsfeld declared, "would be to try to make [the Northern Alliance] successful, to do things that are helpful to them so that they have the opportunity to move forward . . . towards Mazar-i-Sharif . . . towards the northeast . . . [and] to move south towards Kabul."



Rumsfeld's endorsement of a Northern Alliance attack on Kabul represented a clean break with Powell's approach. But it was also in keeping with President Bush's declaration that airstrikes would clear the way for a ground offensive to overthrow the Taliban. Two days later, therefore, Powell tried to swing things back in his direction. On October 22, Powell declared that "The Northern Alliance [was] on the march in the north toward Mazar-i-Sharif" and its forces were "gathering their strength to at least invest Kabul." The key word was "invest," by which Powell meant surround but not enter. The State Department sent officials to extract a promise from the Northern Alliance that they would not enter Kabul, and according to the *Times*, the Northern Alliance agreed.

Rumsfeld's partial victory within the administration did not translate into quick results on the ground. Although the United States began carrying out airstrikes against some Taliban front-line forces around Mazar-i-Sharif, they were not as sustained or as devastating as the attacks that would come later. Pentagon officials told the *Times* they were eager to do more to help the alliance, but they expressed some frustration with the military brass for failing "to heavily bomb Taliban front-line positions north of Kabul and other key locations."

Top NSC officials were also frustrated. And with good reason. In the third week of October, the Taliban actually launched a successful counteroffensive against the Northern Alliance and drove Alliance forces back several miles. Northern Alliance leaders now complained they were stalled four miles from Mazar-i-Sharif, waiting for the United States to start dropping heavy munitions on a sustained basis. For alliance forces to break through Taliban lines around the cities of Mazar-i-Sharif and Taliqan in northern Afghanistan, Afghan opposition leaders told the *Times*, several days of unyielding strikes would have to be carried out in one place. "Bomb it day and night for four days in a row," a senior Alliance official advised. "Don't let them sleep. Then we will be able to break the lines."

As Mufson and Ricks have reported, it was at about this time that administration officials began to acknowledge that the old strategy—the rapid fall of the Taliban after an initial phase of limited bombing, and the "smoking out" of bin Laden—was not working. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Richard Myers, was now warning, "This is going to be a very, very long campaign. It may take till next spring. It may take till next summer. It may take longer than that in Afghanistan." Rear Adm. John Stufflebeem, a spokesman for the chiefs, did not hide the military's sense of miscalculation: "I am a bit surprised at how doggedly [the Taliban is] hanging on to their—to power."

By the end of the third week of October, then, American officials were growing increasingly nervous that the war would, indeed, drag on interminably. In Europe, support for what was starting to look like an inconclusive air campaign seemed to be waning. At the same time, the

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Times's Burns reported, American officials were growing impatient with the Pakistani government. The Pakistanis were still having no luck putting together a Pashtun coalition, and the Americans began to suspect the pro-Taliban Pakistani intelligence services "of manipulating the talks to ensure that Taliban elements retain a decisive hand." The Americans became infuriated when the Pakistanis tried to present as a "moderate" a known anti-American Islamic hardliner.

The Bush administration thus began to shift more decisively toward what Michael Gordon called "the new strategy" of supporting Northern Alliance ground offensives by massive air attacks on front-line Taliban troops. Mufson and Ricks described the new "Pentagon strategy" as "fiercer, broader and far more reliant on Afghan rebels than planners originally envisioned." Having "first focused on winning over southern leaders of the Pashtuns . . . the U.S. approach now [was] to use Special Forces on the ground and bombers in the air to bolster rebel forces attacking Taliban strongholds." The "relatively restrained attacks by fighter jets off Navy carriers that characterized the first three weeks of the campaign [had] given way to body blows by heavy B-52 long-range bombers."

On October 26, American warplanes began pounding Taliban front-line forces, and for the first time dropped cluster bombs designed to obliterate troop and armor concentrations. The overall thrust of American airstrikes shifted dramatically at about this time, too. Previously, the majority of missions had been flown against Taliban strongholds in the south. But on October 26 Myers announced that the vast majority of strike missions were now being flown against the Taliban's front-line troops. Pentagon officials also told reporters they planned to increase significantly the number of Special Forces helping the Northern Alliance.

The biggest air offensive against Taliban front lines in the North began on October 30. Carrier aircraft were joined by B-1 and B-52 bombers in what Pentagon officials described as the largest strike on Taliban positions since the start of the war. The B-52s began carpet-bombing the Taliban forces that day. The bombing continued steadily into the first week of November. By November 7, the Northern Alliance was on the outskirts of Mazar-i-Sharif. On November 8, according to the *Times*, two additional Special Forces teams were inserted into the area where the Northern Alliance was fighting. They played a key part in the final advance. By November 9, the Taliban was announcing that its troops had abandoned that key northern city, blaming the American air onslaught for their defeat. "For seven days continuously they have been bombing Taliban positions," the head of the Taliban news agency noted. "They used very large bombs." Northern Alliance leaders agreed: "The American bombardment was instrumental."

The bombardment continued to be instrumental as the Northern Alliance advanced on Herat and Kabul. Powell nonetheless stuck to his anti-Northern Alliance strategy right to the end, getting President Bush to say on Nov. 10 that the Northern Alliance should not advance "into the city of Kabul itself." As it turned out, the United States had no capacity to stop—and Rumsfeld had no intention of stopping—the Northern Alliance. Rumsfeld calmly averred that the Alliance would "attack and take Kabul when they feel like it . . . and when they think that they're capable of defeating the Taliban and getting them out of there." And when the Northern Alliance did just that, the American war on terrorism scored its first substantial victory.

Can we draw the proper lessons from that victory? Surely one is that an aggressive strategy aiming at rapid victory is almost always preferable to a dilatory strategy that delays victory. The State Department's efforts to achieve the perfect political solution in Afghanistan, to minimize all conceivable friction with the Pakistanis, and to employ the minimal amount of American force, were well intentioned, but they were dead wrong. Successful diplomacy follows success on the battlefield, not vice versa. Winning the war is key to winning hearts and minds. Had the president not changed course, there would be no celebrations in the streets of Kabul today.

Perhaps the president will keep his own success in mind as we move forward now. Perhaps he will learn to trust the instincts of his secretary of defense a little more than those of his secretary of state. For even as this magazine goes to print, the secretary of state seems bent on repeating his recent errors, this time in the Middle East. At a time when the United States should be exploiting its victory and pressing hard, both in Afghanistan and against other terrorist threats, Powell has decided the time is right to appease the Arab world by leaning on Israel. Talk about choosing to slow your own momentum, or snatching defeat out of the jaws of victory. It's not too late for the president to consider a change of course here, as well.

The administration's shift of strategy at the end of October has been vindicated by the events of the last two weeks. Successful war commanders have always understood that altering strategy when circumstances so dictate is no vice, and that flexibility in pursuit of victory is a virtue. We are only near the end of the beginning of the war on terrorism, but the president seems to have already grasped this fundamental principle. ♦

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Postmodern Jihad

What Osama bin Laden learned from the Left

By Waller R. Newell

Much has been written about Osama bin Laden's Islamic fundamentalism; less about the contribution of European Marxist postmodernism to bin Laden's thinking. In fact, the ideology by which al Qaeda justifies its acts of terror owes as much to baleful trends in Western thought as it does to a perversion of Muslim beliefs. Osama's doctrine of terror is partly a Western export.

To see this, it is necessary to revisit the intellectual brew that produced the ideology of Third World socialism in the 1960s. A key figure here is the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), who not only helped shape several generations of European leftists and founded postmodernism, but also was a leading supporter of the Nazis. Heidegger argued for the primacy of "peoples" in contrast with the alienating individualism of "modernity." In order to escape the yoke of Western capitalism and the "idle chatter" of constitutional democracy, the "people" would have to return to its primordial destiny through an act of violent revolutionary "resolve."

Heidegger saw in the Nazis just this return to the blood-and-soil heritage of the authentic German people. Paradoxically, the Nazis embraced technology at its most advanced to shatter the iron cage of modernity and bring back the purity of the distant past. And they embraced terror and violence to push beyond the modern present—hence the term "postmodern"—and vault the people back before modernity, with its individual liberties and market economy, to the imagined collective austerity of the feudal age.

This vision of the postmodernist revolution went straight from Heidegger into the French postwar Left, especially the works of Jean-Paul Sartre, eager apologist for Stalinism and the Cultural Revolution in China. Sartre's protégé, the Algerian writer Frantz Fanon, crystallized the Third World variant of postmodernist revolution in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). From there, it entered the world of Middle Eastern radicals. Many of the leaders of the Shiite revolution in Iran that deposed the modernizing shah and brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power in 1979 had studied Fanon's brand of Marxism. Ali Shari'at, the Sorbonne-educated Iranian sociologist of religion considered by many the intellectual father of the Shiite revolution, translated *The Wretched of the Earth* and Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* into Persian. The Iranian revolution was a synthesis of Islamic fundamentalism and European Third World socialism.

In the postmodernist leftism of these revolutionaries, the "people" supplanted Marx's proletariat as the agent of revolution. Following Heidegger and Fanon, leaders like Lin Piao, ideologist of the Red Guards in China, and Pol Pot, student of leftist philosophy in France before becoming a founder of the Khmer Rouge, justified revolution as a therapeutic act by which non-Western peoples would regain the dignity they had lost to colonial oppressors and to American-style materialism, selfishness, and immorality. A purifying violence would purge the people of egoism and hedonism and draw them back into a primitive collective of self-sacrifice.

Many elements in the ideology of al Qaeda—set forth most clearly in Osama bin Laden's 1996 "Declaration of War Against America"—derive from this same mix. Indeed, in Arab intellectual circles today, bin Laden is already being likened to an earlier icon of Third World revolution who renounced a life of privilege to head for the mountains and fight the American oppressor, Che Guevara. According to Cairo journalist Issandr Elamsani, Arab leftist intellectuals still see the world very much in 1960s terms. "They are all ex-Sorbonne, old Marxists," he says, "who look at everything through a postcolonial prism."

Just as Heidegger wanted the German people to return to a foggy, medieval, blood-and-soil collectivism purged of the corruptions of modernity, and just as Pol Pot wanted Cambodia to return to the Year Zero, so does Osama dream of returning his world to the imagined purity of seventh-century Islam. And just as Fanon argued that revolution can never accomplish its goals through negotiation

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or peaceful reform, so does Osama regard terror as good in itself, a therapeutic act, quite apart from any concrete aim. The willingness to kill is proof of one's purity.

According to journalist Robert Worth, writing in the *New York Times* on the intellectual roots of Islamic terror, bin Laden is poorly educated in Islamic theology. A wealthy playboy in his youth, he fell under the influence of radical Arab intellectuals of the 1960s who blended calls for Marxist revolution with calls for a pure Islamic state.

Many of these men were imprisoned and executed for their attacks on Arab regimes; Sayyid Qutb, for example, a major figure in the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, was executed in Egypt in 1965. But their ideas lived on. Qutb's intellectual progeny included Fathi Yakan, who likened the coming Islamic revolution to the French and Russian revolutions, Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian activist killed in a car bombing in 1989, and Safar Al-Hawali, a Saudi fundamentalist frequently jailed by the Saudi government. As such men dreamed of a pure Islamic state, European revolutionary ideology was seldom far from their minds. Wrote Fathi Yakan, "The groundwork for the French Revolution was laid by Rousseau, Voltaire and Montesquieu; the Communist Revolution realized plans set by Marx, Engels and Lenin. . . . The same holds true for us as well."

The influence of Qutb's *Signposts on the Road* (1964) is clearly traceable in pronouncements by Islamic Jihad, the group that would justify its assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat in 1981 as a step toward ending American domination of Egypt and ushering in a pure Islamic order. In the 1990s, Islamic Jihad would merge with al Qaeda, and Osama's "Declaration of War Against America" in turn would show an obvious debt to the Islamic Jihad manifesto "The Neglected Duty."

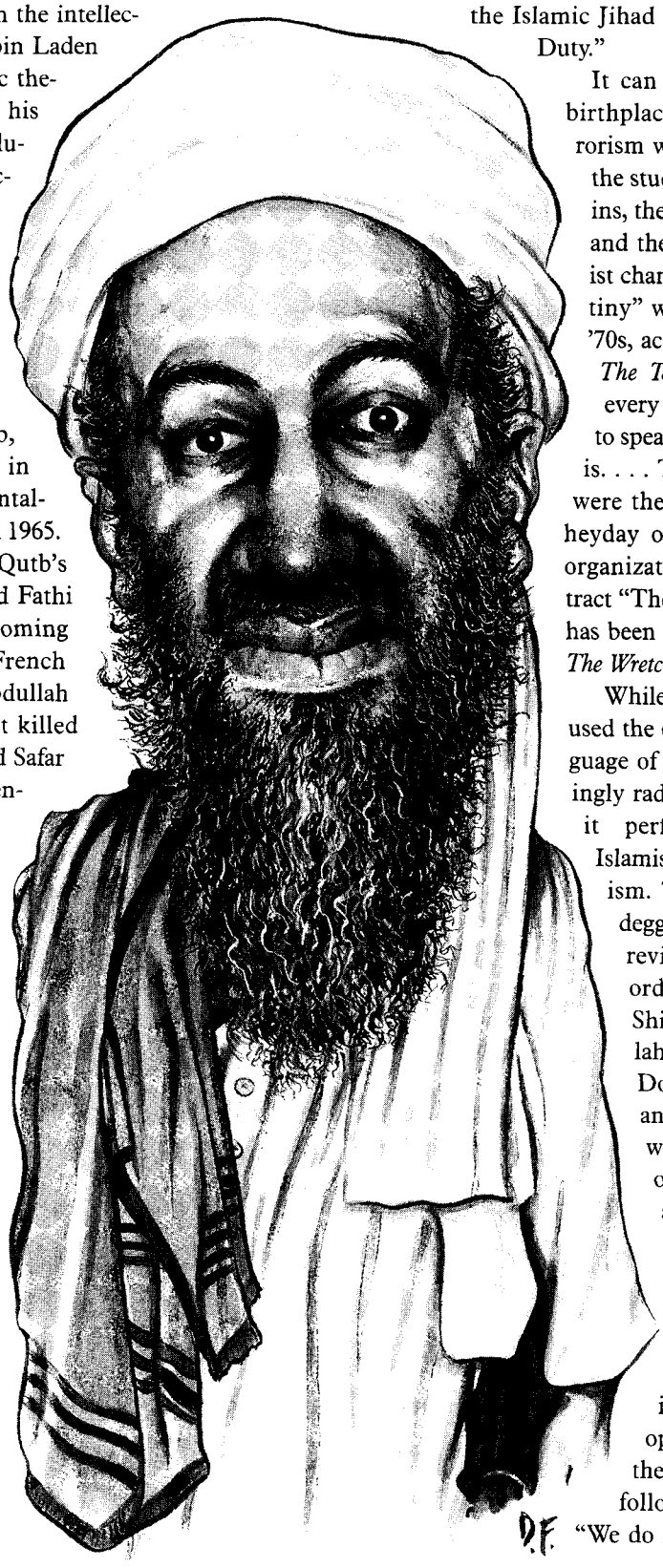

Illustration by Drew Friedman

It can be argued, then, that the birthplace of Osama's brand of terrorism was Paris 1968, when, amid the student riots and radical teach-ins, the influence of Sartre, Fanon, and the new postmodernist Marxist champions of the "people's destiny" was at its peak. By the mid '70s, according to Claire Sterling's *The Terror Network*, "practically every terrorist and guerrilla force to speak of was represented in Paris. . . . The Palestinians especially were there in force." This was the heyday of Yasser Arafat's terrorist organization Al Fatah, whose 1968 tract "The Revolution and Violence" has been called "a selective précis of *The Wretched of the Earth*."

While Al Fatah occasionally still used the old-fashioned Leninist language of class struggle, the increasingly radical groups that succeeded it perfected the melding of Islamism and Third World socialism. Their tracts blended Heidegger and Fanon with calls to revive a strict Islamic social order. "We declare," says the Shiite terrorist group Hezbollah in its "Open Letter to the Downtrodden in Lebanon and the World" (1985), "that we are a nation that fears only God" and will not accept "humiliation from America and its allies and the Zionist entity that has usurped the sacred Islamic land." The aim of violent struggle is "giving all our people the opportunity to determine their fate." But that fate must follow the prescribed course: "We do not hide our commitment

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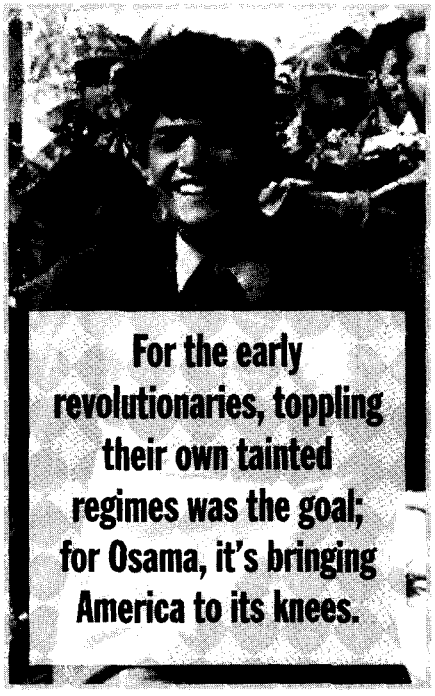
to the rule of Islam, . . . which alone guarantees justice and dignity for all and prevents any new imperialist attempt to infiltrate our country. . . . This Islamic resistance must . . . with God's help receive from all Muslims in all parts of the world utter support."

These 1980s calls to revolution could have been uttered last week by Osama bin Laden. Indeed, the chief doctrinal difference between the radicals of several decades ago and Osama only confirms the influence of postmodernist socialism on the latter: Whereas Qutb and other early Islamists looked mainly inward, concentrating on revolution in Muslim countries, Osama directs his struggle primarily outward, against American hegemony. While for the early revolutionaries, toppling their own tainted regimes was the principal path to the purified Islamic state, for Osama, the chief goal is bringing America to its knees.



The relationship between postmodernist European leftism and Islamic radicalism is a two-way street: Not only have Islamists drawn on the legacy of the European Left, but European Marxists have taken heart from Islamic terrorists who seemed close to achieving the longed-for revolution against American hegemony. Consider Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, two leading avatars of postmodernism. Foucault was sent by the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* to observe the Iranian revolution and the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Like Sartre, who had rhapsodized over the Algerian revolution, Foucault was enthralled, pronouncing Khomeini "a kind of mystic saint." The Frenchman welcomed "Islamic government" as a new form of "political spirituality" that could inspire Western radicals to combat capitalist hegemony.

Heavily influenced by Heidegger and Sartre, Foucault was typical of postmodernist socialists in having neither concrete political aims nor the slightest interest in tangible economic grievances as motives for revolution. To him, the appeal of revolution was aesthetic and voyeuristic: "a violence, an intensity, an utterly remarkable passion." For Foucault as for Fanon, Hezbollah, and the rest down to Osama, the purpose of violence is not to relieve poverty or adjust borders. Violence is an end in itself. Foucault exalts it as "the craving, the taste, the capacity, the possibility of an absolute sacrifice." In this, he is at one with Osama's followers, who claim to love death while the Americans "love Coca-Cola."

Derrida, meanwhile, reacted to the collapse of the Soviet Union by calling for a "new international." Whereas the old international was made up of the economically oppressed, the new one would be a grab bag of the culturally alienated, "the dispossessed and the marginalized": students, feminists, environmentalists, gays, aboriginals, all uniting to combat American-led globalization. Islamic fundamentalists were obvious candidates for inclusion.

And so it is that in the latest leftist potboiler, *Empire*, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri depict the American-dominated global order as today's version of the bourgeoisie. Rising up against it is Derrida's "new international." Hardt and Negri identify Islamist terrorism as a spearhead of "the postmodern revolution" against "the new imperial order." Why? Because of "its refusal of modernity as a weapon of Euro-American hegemony."

Empire is currently flavor of the month among American postmodernists. It is almost eerily appropriate that the book should be the joint production of an actual terrorist, currently in jail, and a professor of literature at Duke, the university that led postmodernism's conquest of American academia. In professorial hands, postmodernism is reduced to a parlor game in which we "deconstruct" great works of the past and impose our own meaning on them without regard for the authors' intentions or the truth or falsity of our interpretations. This has damaged liberal education in America. Still, it doesn't kill people—unlike the deadly postmodernism out there in the world. Heirs to Heidegger and his leftist devotees, the terrorists don't limit themselves to deconstructing texts. They want to deconstruct the West, through acts like those we witnessed on September 11.

What the terrorists have in common with our armchair nihilists is a belief in the primacy of the radical will, unrestrained by traditional moral teachings such as the requirements of prudence, fairness, and reason. The terrorists seek to put this belief into action, shattering tradition through acts of violent revolutionary resolve. That is how al Qaeda can ignore mainstream Islam, which prohibits the deliberate killing of noncombatants, and slaughter innocents in the name of creating a new world, the latest in a long line of grimly punitive collectivist utopias. ♦

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Florida 2000: Bush Wins Again!

Everything you've heard about the latest media recount is wrong.

By Einer Elhauge

Here's the conventional interpretation of the most recent media recount of the Bush-Gore election: Bush would have won even if the U.S. Supreme Court had not stopped the statewide recount of undervotes ordered by the Florida Supreme Court. But Gore would have won a statewide recount (that he did not request) of undervotes and overvotes. This seems to confirm that the U.S. Supreme Court was wrong to intervene, since the system would have produced a Bush victory anyway, and it further seems to confirm that Gore "really" won. This interpretation is wrong, both in its factual premises and in its conclusions.

First, the media recount does not show Bush would have won if Florida's manual recount of undervotes had continued. What it shows (as was apparent at the time) is that Bush would have won such a recount conducted under standards applied uniformly within each county by counters who were screened for their political bias.

But that was decidedly *not* the process underway in Florida on December 12. Then recounting was being conducted by unscreened temporary workers supervised by partisan election officials. Nor had each county picked one standard in advance, and stuck to it. Palm Beach and Broward began by using the only preexisting written standard, namely, that there had to be some perforation of the ballot. But then, after early results showed this did not pick up many votes for Gore, they switched to a dimple standard. Later still, these counties decided to switch to a policy of exercising discretion over *which* dimples they counted. By the end, as Gore's counsel memorably conceded, the standard being applied varied from table to table.

Does it matter? The media recount confirms that it does. The media consortium—the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the Associated Press, CNN, and four Florida newspapers—contracted with the National Opinion Research Center to examine all the uncounted ballots in the state. Yet even when a single standard was specified, the counters hired by NORC frequently disagreed in their ballot interpretation.

Although some accounts stress that the counters agreed on 96 percent of punchcard ballots, that 4 percent error rate greatly exceeded the election margin of .001 percent. This is rather like trying to recheck a microscope's measurement of an electron's width using the human eye and a yardstick. Moreover, the 96 percent figure is artificially inflated by agreements on ballots where there was no marking to dispute. On ballots where at least one counter saw a potential vote for Bush or Gore, the counters disagreed a third of the time.

Political affiliation mattered. Though the NORC counters were supposed to be impartial, Republican counters were 4 percent more likely than Democratic counters to deny a mark was for Gore. Even more striking, Democrats were 25 percent more likely to deny a mark was for Bush. This bias may well be utterly unconscious, but it remains a problem for any manual recount process.

Indeed, if this is the sort of accuracy one gets from an unhurried professional effort when counters are screened for bias and bound to the *same* standard, imagine the sort of inaccuracy that would have been produced by a rushed partisan set of counters each free to choose whatever standard he wanted. The U.S. Supreme Court was amply justified in putting a stop to it.

Critics of the High Court have argued that Florida's manual recount—while inaccurate, arbitrary, and haphazard—was not unconstitutional. Ronald Dworkin, for example, argues that the equal protection clause is violated only when state law creates "distinctions that put some citizens, in advance, at a disadvantage against others." But what made this process alarming was precisely that it did *not* set forth any objective standards "in advance."

Einer Elhauge is a Harvard law professor and represented the Florida House of Representatives during the 2000 election dispute. The views expressed here are his own and are not intended to represent the views of either institution.

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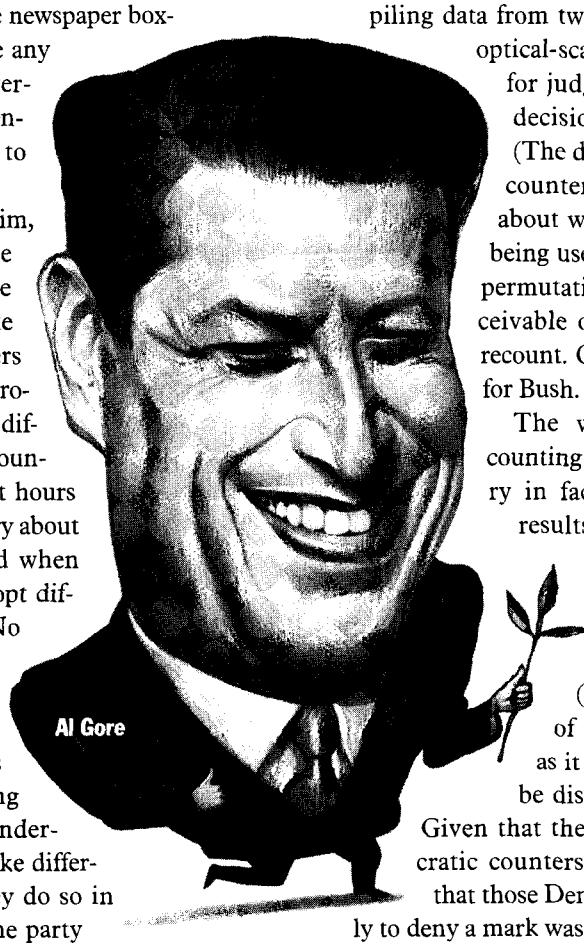
Such standardless discretion in the hands of partisan county officials is worrisome because it allows them to engage in *sub rosa* discrimination against the opposing party about how (and indeed whether) to conduct manual recounts. Since without standards such discrimination is hard to prove, the best way to vindicate the constitutional right of equal treatment is to prevent partisan officials from exercising such standardless discretion at all. For precisely this reason, well-established Supreme Court precedent makes such standardless discretion unlawful if used to hand out parade permits or locate newspaper boxes. Why should the protection be any less when discretion is being exercised over the far more fundamental question of which votes to count?

Nor is it true, as the critics claim, that if one really accepted the Court's logic, any election where some counties use more accurate counting machinery than others would also have to violate equal protection. Just as no constitutional difficulty is raised when different counties in advance set forth different hours for parade permits, so too no worry about *sub rosa* discrimination is raised when different counties in advance adopt different counting machinery. No county has incentives to reduce its own political clout, so any decision it makes reflects a tradeoff between the fiscal costs and political benefits of buying new machinery that reduces undervotes. Different counties may make different tradeoffs, but as long as they do so in advance, that does not reflect one party trying to manipulate the electoral rules to discriminate against the other party.



It was thus entirely reasonable for the U.S. Supreme Court to terminate the manual recounts and restore the result produced by a method that did not raise these equal protection problems: the machine recount. This approach had the considerable advantage of conforming to the actual Florida statute before the Florida court rewrote it to provide that manual recounts are available in any close election. As the counsel for the Florida attorney general (who was also Gore's state chairman) conceded, before this litigation Florida had never allowed a manual recount to be conducted simply because a losing party asserted that humans can interpret ballots better than machines. The statute instead restricted manual recounts to cases of county-specific machine malfunction.

Second, the media recount did *not* show that Gore would have won if all the ballots rejected in the machine tally had been manually recounted under any uniform standard. With months and months to do their work, the NORC counters had the luxury of trying out different sets of standards on a statewide basis—compiling data from two different standards for judging optical-scan ballots, six different standards for judging punchcard ballots, and two decision rules for counting the latter. (The decision rules came into play when counters disagreed among themselves about whether a ballot met the standard being used.) Depending on which of these permutations you select, there are 24 conceivable outcomes of a statewide manual recount. Of these, 12 went for Gore and 12 for Bush.

The widespread media reports that counting overvotes produced a Gore victory in fact referred to only six of these results—those where the looser of the two optical scanner standards (judged by a single counter) was combined with the loosest of the punchcard decision rules (the one not requiring a consensus of the counters). This set of results, as it happens, is the one most likely to be distorted by counters' political bias. Given that there were 20 percent more Democratic counters than Republican counters, and that those Democrats were 25 percent more likely to deny a mark was for Bush, such bias cannot be discounted. One of those Democratic counters had even written articles calling the Bush victory a "coup d'état."

Finally, the media recount did not actually include all the ballots. The recount did include both undervotes and overvotes. But despite the researchers' best efforts, it missed 1,345 of them, enough for the lead statistician to conclude that margins smaller than a few hundred votes were "too close to call." All the pro-Gore results fell in that category, as did many of the pro-Bush results. More important, the recount only dealt with the 3 percent of ballots initially interpreted to reflect a vote for either no candidate or multiple candidates. If one believes in the superiority of manual recounts, there is no reason not to extend that proposition to the 97 percent of ballots initially interpreted

Illustration by Earl Keleny

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to reflect a vote for a particular candidate. Reinterpretation may have changed some of those to a vote for another candidate or, more likely, an invalid vote for multiple candidates.

The underlying lesson is well known to postelection tacticians: In any close election, you can change the result through manual recounts if you keep playing with the standards and the selection of ballots you recount. In Florida, an initial complaint about butterfly ballots (which went nowhere because they were legal) metastasized into a claim that manual recounts in selective counties were necessary because punchcard ballots undercounted votes. When (even with changed deadlines and standards) those manual recounts did not turn up enough Gore votes, the Florida Supreme Court ordered a statewide recount of undervotes alone. Had that not worked, and had Gore partisans prevailed in their insistence that no deadline should be imposed, there might well have been a recount of overvotes too, even though these were mainly caused by the ostensibly superior optical-scan ballots. Or some other selection of ballots would have been tried, until finally a better result was obtained.

Contrary to the Monday morning quarterbacks, the Gore legal team did in fact know what it was doing—the legal equivalent of using trial and error to pick a combination lock. It simply was shut down by the U.S. Supreme Court before it found the precise combination of standards (or lack thereof) and sets of ballots to change the outcome.

In the end, the media recount explodes the unexamined factual premise that drove the Florida Supreme Court: that manual recounts are more accurate than machine recounts. No one doubts that machines have their own inaccuracies, but there is no reason to think these are greater than human error. More important, machine error is randomly distributed, not skewed by partisanship. Machine counting was introduced in this country not just for speed and cost, but to reduce the fraud and other human error that used to attend ballot counting.

The U.S. Supreme Court correctly established that states cannot leave human counters free to invent and use varying standards for counting ballots in the midst of an election dispute. Recounts must conform to objective standards established beforehand by lawmakers behind a "veil of ignorance" about which candidate the method would benefit. Despite what Al Gore said repeatedly, the dispute was never about whether to "count every vote." It was about *how* to count them. And, as we now know, how not to count them. ◆

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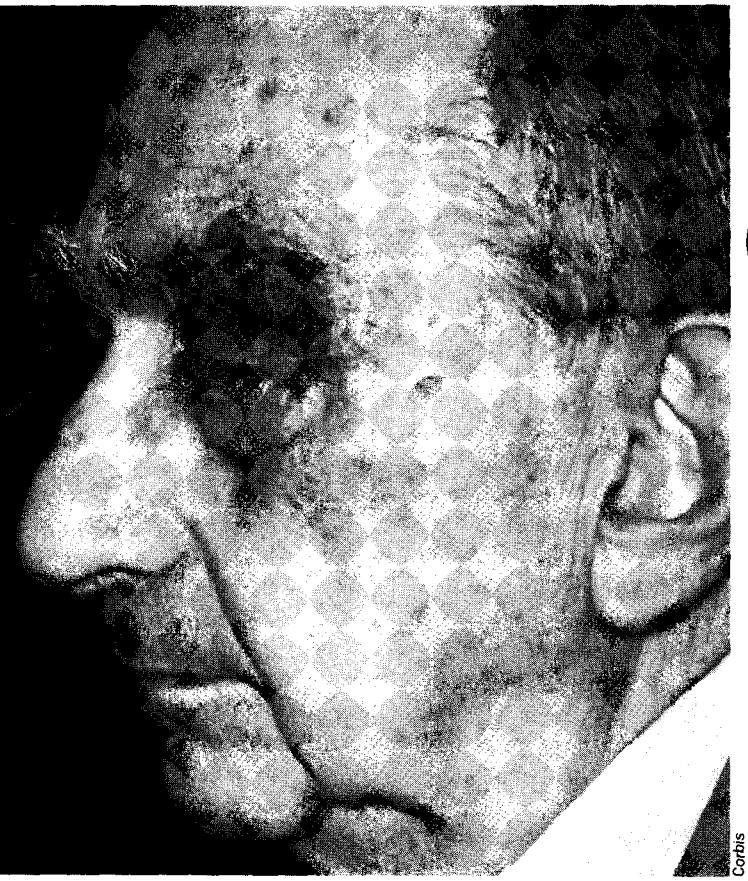
Where Physics and Politics Meet

The extraordinary life of Edward Teller

BY DAVID BERLINSKI



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Edward Teller has undertaken, at the age of ninety-three, to tell the story of his life. In conducting an exercise of this sort, most men find much to admire, but little to censure in themselves. An autobiography thus tends to be an exercise in double deception: the reader deceived by the author, the author by himself. Teller's *Memoirs: A Twentieth Century Journey in Science and Politics* does not constitute a notable exception to the genre's rules. His work done, he finds it good. The reader may come in the end to agree with him—interesting evidence that in compiling an autobiography a man may reveal the truth without ever telling it completely.

Teller was born in Budapest in 1907, during the long autumn of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The autumn over, there followed by the First World War, civil insurrection, and dictatorships of the left and the right. From the first, he found himself devoted to science, and among the sciences, to mathematical physics. He was by nature a man persuaded of his own pleasantness and consequently a romantic in his personal life and a sentimentalist in politics. Until 1931, he admits, he "was ignorant of most of the facts about political affairs." The Nazis appalled him, if only because they appalled almost everyone; Stalin and the Soviet Union, on the other hand, provoked a suspension of his judgment. He listened with patience to physicists such as Lev Landau, persuaded of the Communist cause and prepared to perish for its sake. It was not until he read Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* in 1943 that his understanding improved. Thereafter, it became very much improved.

Memoirs
A Twentieth Century Journey in Science and Politics
by Edward Teller
Perseus, 544 pp., $35

Like many other physicists, including the young J. Robert Oppenheimer, Teller was profoundly influenced—he was *enraptured*—by the creation of quantum mechanics, the strangest and most powerful of physical theories. In this he was fortunate but not lucky. He studied with Werner Heisenberg at Göttingen and then with Niels Bohr in Copenhagen. But by the early 1930s, the greater part of the great work had already been done, classical physics shattered. Teller was able to witness the last revolution in mathematical physics, but he had arrived too late to participate at its birth.

Teller left Europe for the United States in 1935 and promptly found a generous sinecure at George Washington University. No more than a dozen physicists quite understood the new quantum mechanics, and Teller was one of them. No doubt, he added a certain European cachet to a department otherwise known for its industrious mediocrity. It is nonetheless not easy to imagine him addressing undergraduates or attending faculty meetings. He was, by his own account, a large, a *rumpled* personality, at once brooding and expansive, the engine of his ambition firing without pause.

By 1939, the world had conspired to make more room for him than George Washington University afforded. Developments in physics had made it clear that the relationship between

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matter and energy was something more than the theoretical artifact Einstein had predicted in 1905.

Enrico Fermi had spotted the telltale signs of nuclear fission in experiments conducted in 1932 (although Fermi unaccountably had failed to register what he had seen). Six years later, the German chemists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann carried out similar experiments, bombarding uranium with a stream of neutrons. With the help of Carl von Weizsäcker, they drew the appropriate conclusions. They had witnessed nuclear fission. Their analysis was strengthened and confirmed a year later by Lise Meitner.

The consequences were plain to every one of the émigré physicists. A bomb could be built. The only question was whether it would be built by Nazi Germany or the United States. In 1939 Teller and Leo Szilárd traveled to Einstein's house on Long Island in order to elicit his support for the development of an atomic weapon, carrying a letter Szilárd had drafted. Einstein had long been an indecisive pacifist, willing to condemn but not to reject the use of violence in international affairs. He signed the letter without significant change. Szilárd forwarded the letter to President Roosevelt.

The American scientific and military establishment required four years to construct an atomic weapon, their success an extraordinary feat of disciplined engineering. J. Robert Oppenheimer was recruited from the University of California at Berkeley to lead a team assembled at Los Alamos. Oppenheimer had been known as a reserved and somewhat arrogant professor, quick to ridicule his intellectual inferiors. But he undertook the transformation of his personality and against great odds succeeded in disciplining the immensely fractious and self-important group of scientists he had assembled. It was in all respects a remarkable performance. Teller's account of Oppenheimer's success is the more impressive inasmuch as Teller never manages to conceal the fact that he disliked the man because he felt inadequate in his presence.

The project the physicists had set themselves possessed an undeniable moral urgency. Germany had retained a cadre of talented physicists, most notably Werner Heisenberg, who had chosen to remain in Germany by invoking the unassailable but irrelevant logical truth that "if my brother steals a silver spoon he is still my brother." It was natural to suppose that he was lending his support to the development of a German bomb—as, in fact, he was. And Germany embodied a brilliant and advanced technological society. An American scientist concerned that he might be performing the devil's work at Los Alamos had only to imagine an atomic weapon in Hitler's hands to resolve his doubts.

For reasons that are still unclear, the Nazi state failed to develop an atomic weapon. German physicists were sequestered in Britain after the war, and their conversations secretly recorded. The recordings reveal a surprising level of technical incompetence, with Heisenberg offering his colleagues an analysis of the relevant details that was in error by an order of magnitude. Teller suggests Heisenberg's incompetence was feigned. This is a thesis as implausible as it is generous. Heisenberg was a notorious arithmetic bungler, and it is more likely that his carelessness, rather than his character, kept the bomb from German hands.

Although Teller worked on the development of the atomic bomb, sometimes with diligence and often with resentment, his real interests were in the development of thermonuclear weapons. Enrico Fermi had raised the possibility of such weapons with Teller in 1941, observing that an atomic weapon might be used to trigger a thermonuclear reaction. Two quite different processes are at work. Atomic weapons divide heavier atoms into lighter elements. The change between states is released as energy. Thermonuclear weapons fuse lighter atoms into heavier elements. And the change between states is again released as energy. Thermonuclear devices have a potentially unlimited yield; if needed, they can destroy the planet; if employed, no doubt they will.

Teller thus found himself in an odd position. His colleagues were endeavoring to surmount the immense technical difficulties involved in the construction of an atomic weapon—difficulties that involved both detailed theoretical calculations and practical problems of metallurgy. And all the while, Teller was urging that he be allowed to undertake a still more demanding project, one that presumed that the problem at hand had already been settled. In retrospect, his advocacy seems both rational and farsighted, but at the time, it may have seemed otherwise, rather as if a man who has not mastered the bicycle were demanding access to a race car.

Teller's interest in thermonuclear weapons was in part an expression of his particular talents as a physicist. He was not a great theoretician like his teachers, nor a master of detail like Hans Bethe. He had no gift for experiment. His particular talent lay in his ability to undertake intellectual gestures that were somewhat larger and more audacious than his colleagues. A hint was all he needed. Thereafter, his imagination was consumed. His interest in thermonuclear weapons represented largely an intelligent man's obsessive curiosity about a number of technically challenging problems.

It is on this level that Teller's story is personal. But like the other physicists at Los Alamos, Teller was fate's servant as well as her master, and his determination to construct thermonuclear

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Oppenheimer, Fermi, and Ernest Lawrence in 1940.

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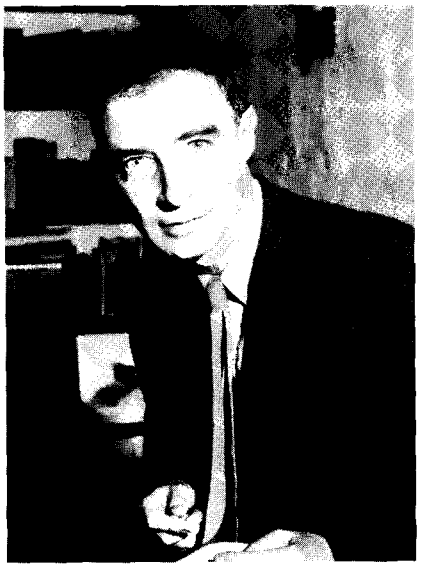

Left: Hulton / Archive. Right: Bettmann / Corbis.

Left: J. Robert Oppenheimer at his peak in the 1940s. Right: President Reagan offers an award to Edward Teller.

weapons, although prompted by an entirely private scientific calculus, also served several purely political ends.

The destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 disturbed many of the physicists who had made it possible. They imagined a world in which nuclear weapons were constructed by hands less capable than their own. In a widely circulated remark, Oppenheimer compared potential nuclear antagonists to two scorpions in a bottle. The alternative, he thought, must be the international control of atomic weapons. Enrico Fermi, I.I. Rabi, and Hans Bethe agreed. Physicists reposed their hopes for world peace in international schemes such as the Acheson-Lilienthal report, which formed the basis for the Baruch Plan. Oppenheimer's scorpions consumed their imagination. Few of the physicists observed that as an honor system is unworkable among thieves, disarmament schemes are unworkable among states.

In any event, the Soviet Union detonated its own atomic bomb in 1948. Those physicists who had been concerned to place atomic weapons beyond the control of the United States now devoted their efforts to placing thermonuclear weapons beyond its reach. In their minority report to the General Advisory Committee of the Atomic Energy Commission, Enrico Fermi and I.I. Rabi condemned a hydrogen weapon as a "necessarily evil thing considered in any light." The majority report (signed by James B. Conant, Hartley Rowe, Cyril Smith, L.A. DuBridge, Oliver Buckley, and J. Robert Oppenheimer) was hardly less emphatic, if slightly more precise: "The extreme dangers to mankind inherent in this proposal wholly outweigh any military advantage that could come from this development."

Teller, on the other hand, argued that the United States must have such weapons simply because the Soviet Union would have them. Physicists in the Soviet Union argued the same in reverse. These arguments enjoyed an enviable simplicity, and if they were the expression of competitive envy in international affairs, it has not often been observed that envy plays a lesser role among states than it does among men.

President Truman decided the issue in favor of Teller. Work on the hydrogen bomb commenced in earnest in 1950. It is by no means clear from Teller's *Memoirs* just who played the decisive role. Teller assigns himself credit for the essential idea that fusion could be induced by compression of a bomb's core, and he assigns the physicist Richard Garwin credit for the detailed design that made his idea workable. The mathematician Stanislaw Ulam played, on this account, an altogether minor role. Mathematical gossip generally has it the other way around, with Ulam rousing himself from his habitual torpor—he was reputed to enjoy the gift of laziness—just long enough to confide the right idea to his cleaning woman. The details can no longer be verified. In any event, the bomb was built, and the world armed itself. A balance of terror was the result, and as one might have expected, the world was suitably terrified. The editors of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* placed a "doomsday clock" on their journal's cover. It was forever set close to midnight.

Curiously enough, midnight did not come. The balance of terror that has prevailed from 1954 until the present day has proved remarkably stable. Nations that acquired thermonuclear weapons found it prudent not to use them. If the aim of arms control was the avoidance of nuclear war, arms proliferation provided the outcome that arms control had only promised. A stable balance of terror is hardly an ideal condition for the human race, but it appeared to be the only accessible condition. What had been learned could not be unlearned.

Although Teller has had a long and illustrious career as a warrior priest, he remains in the public mind a dark and disturbing figure. During the 1950s, he participated in an epic bureaucratic battle against J. Robert Oppenheimer, who had acquired a position of great influence on the Atomic Energy Commission. It was a battle that destroyed both men: Oppenheimer because he lost, Teller because he won.

Heavy-bearded and dark, Teller seemed to many to convey an air of moral malignity. He was popularly known as the "father of the H-bomb,"

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Teller with an H-bomb.

and if he objected to the paternal association, he did not widely advert to the fact. Oppenheimer seemed saintly in comparison, projecting—in disagreeably many interviews—a sense of guilt that he had taken pains to conceal, and nothing to employ, while exercising power. In meeting President Truman after the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Oppenheimer announced "he had blood on his hands." Physicists who were uncomfortably aware that events were no longer in their control were pleased to be reminded that once it had been in their hands.

Yet it was Teller, and not Oppenheimer, who had urged that atomic weapons be demonstrated to the Japanese before their military employment. And it was Oppenheimer, and not Teller, who rejected this counsel, arguing that the physicists who had built the bomb should have nothing to say about the circumstances of its use.

If with respect to this issue the popular impression and the historical record are at odds, they are also at odds when it comes to other issues. Robert Oppenheimer was a man of considerable personal negligence. During the 1930s he had acquired a circle of left-wing friends large enough to form a cohort. He had conducted the Los Alamos project with due regard for security, but the fact remains that the Russians were able to construct an atomic weapon in 1948 because they had seen the details of its design in 1945. Oppenheimer received all of the glory for the American bomb; inevitably, he received some of the blame for the Russian bomb as well.

Oppenheimer had initially opposed the hydrogen bomb on the grounds of its uselessness. But no one proposing the development of thermonuclear weapons suggested using them. By 1950 or 1951, Oppenheimer came reluctantly to see what Teller had already seen: A weapon may be politically or diplomatically useful even if militarily useless. In this Oppenheimer saw the light, but he saw it too late. With the advent of Senator McCarthy and the changed climate in Washington, his days in power were numbered.

He did not help himself by his behavior. He had performed brilliantly during World War II, but as he came to reflect on his role, he became progressively more soulful. He suffered visibly. He seemed to suggest that the physicists had corrupted themselves. These attitudes were at odds with his unflagging wish to remain in power, an enterprise not often guided by considerations of epistemological sin.

The American defense establishment lost confidence in J. Robert Oppenheimer some time after he appeared to lose confidence in himself. President Eisenhower appointed Lewis Strauss as the new chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission in 1953. Strauss was hardly capable of addressing Oppenheimer as a physicist. He did not need to. He needed only to enlist the support of a prominent physicist. He found Edward Teller.

The commission determined to strip Oppenheimer of his security clearance, an act that would effectively end his career. Between April and May of 1954, its Personnel Security Board held hearings on Oppenheimer's fitness to retain access to secret documents. Oppenheimer's left-wing associations were thoroughly rehearsed. Whatever they may in their heart of hearts believed, almost all of the great physicists testified on his behalf.

Teller maintains that until almost the last minute he was prepared to join them. But just before his own testimony, Roger Robb, the counsel for the Atomic Energy Commission, shrewdly showed him sections of Oppenheimer's testimony. At issue was Oppenheimer's friendship with Haakon Chevalier, a professor of French at Berkeley.

Oppenheimer's testimony was both implausible and self-serving. He had been approached for information at Los Alamos in August 1943. And in his statements to security officers at the time, he had lied about the identity of his interlocutor. Now he was prepared to affirm that it had been Haakon Chevalier. In explaining how he came to dissemble so copiously, Oppenheimer could think of no better explanation than that he "was an idiot."

And thereafter a shaken Teller felt compelled to share his doubts with the investigating committee. In words that would haunt him, he said, "I would like to see the vital interests of this country in hands which I understand better and therefore trust more." He counseled against extending Oppenheimer's security clearance, a recommendation Oppenheimer's enemies accepted with alacrity.

If Oppenheimer had suffered previously because of the weight of his power, he now suffered grievously because of the effect of its absence. He withdrew to his directorship at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. He grew very thin. He gave occasional public lectures that were admired to the extent that they were not understood. A lesser man would have suffered more; a greater man, less.

Teller in his turn was cut by the community of physicists. Oppenheimer's wound was to his soul; Teller's to his vanity. He had, it was widely believed, testified against Oppenheimer to punish him for not supporting more vigorously the development of the hydrogen bomb. The testimony that he reproduces in his autobiography suggests that this may be so. It is unyielding in its insinuation.

If Teller never completely recovered the respect of his colleagues, it was an affront that did nothing to impede his career as a warrior priest. The men

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responsible for the American military establishment were not generally known for their fine moral delicacies. During Reagan's presidency, it was Teller who was instrumental in developing support for the Strategic Defense Initiative. Among the photographs Teller includes in his *Memoirs*, there is one of him standing beside Reagan, the president beaming enigmatically, Teller impossibly old, stooped, and mottled, but still obviously alert and cunning.

The arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union continued for more than forty years, each side spending billions refining weapons both agreed could not be used. The Soviet Union is no more, and the major European powers are at peace with one another. If this is not Teller's legacy, it is at least a credit to his influence.

The Cold War's balance of terror has become magnificently obsolete, and states now at peace occasionally think they might dispense with the weapons which made that peace possible. But no state trusts that the last state to disarm would not use its singular power to overawe the rest. And so the world remains armed.

And this, too, is a part of Edward Teller's legacy. ♦

Do As I Say, Not As I Do

Alan Dershowitz's advice to young lawyers.

BY AITAN GOELMAN

Claiming to follow in the footsteps of Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*, Basic Books has begun publishing a series of *mentoring* books designed to provide advice to young people beginning their careers. One of the first volumes, entitled *Letters to a Young Lawyer*, is by the ubiquitous Alan Dershowitz, Harvard law professor and celebrity lawyer for such clients as Claus von Bulow and O.J. Simpson.

Letters to a Young Lawyer
by Alan Dershowitz
Basic Books, 226 pp., $22

The idea seems, on its face, highly mockable: Does anyone, even Alan Dershowitz, want a legal profession staffed with young Dershowitzes? But, in fact, novice attorneys could do worse than read this book. It's trenchant and occasionally thought-provoking, and it manages to avoid the cliché-ridden paeans to the majesty of the profession that decorate most works in the genre.

Much of Dershowitz's advice is uncontroversial. He counsels young attorneys to work hard, choose an area of practice they enjoy, and refuse to sacrifice that area for greater remuneration in other areas. *Letters to a Young Lawyer* also effectively debunks myths of the "superlawyer." Dershowitz notes the great majority of cases are decided on the evidence, not on the relative abilities of the attorneys, and that renowned advocates are likely to come to court unprepared, lulled into complacency by their own press.

With regard to legal "giants" of the past, Dershowitz points out the sainted Clarence Darrow "almost certainly bribed witnesses and jurors to secure acquittals or hung juries in criminal cases," and he describes Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas as a self-righteous hypocrite.

Dershowitz sees himself, on the one hand, without irony, as a crusader against injustice who enjoys nothing more than a good, legal fight against unfairness. The result is an odd mix of cynicism and idealism, captured in lines such as "there is no perfect justice, . . . but there is perfect injustice, and we know it when we see it."

Dershowitz revels in his image as a legal bomb-thrower. In a chapter entitled "Have a Good Enemies' List," he declares that "the world is full of evil people and it is important to stand up to evil," and proclaims proudly, "I am a provocateur, not a pacifier." Perhaps that's why he calls the Supreme Court majority in *Bush* v. *Gore* "robed cheaters." It's true that Dershowitz has paid a price for alienating people on every side of American political and legal discourse. He says he will likely never be appointed to any public office, and he views his "non-confirmable" status as a badge of honor, a proof of life lived well and unafraid. But when he insists that he was "never particularly interested in holding any public office," there's a distinct taste of sour grapes.

In *Letters to a Young Lawyer*, Dershowitz shows that he has some insight into himself. He rejects false modesty, recognizing the uniqueness of his own professional experience, while candidly admitting that his career developed "by complete accident." Although the book is deeply self-referential, it's generally not self-indulgent. Virtually all of the anecdotes in the book revolve around Dershowitz himself, and each courtroom story involves a case that Dershowitz ultimately won. But that proves only that he is a lawyer.

The book's most striking flaw may be its failure to explain adequately Dershowitz's decision to help represent O.J. Simpson. Although he repeatedly refers to his involvement in the Simpson case—and reprints, in whole, two letters that he wrote in response to articles criticizing him for his participation—Dershowitz never confronts the real issue: why a self-styled crusader against injustice participated in the legal defense of a multi-millionaire who already had more than sufficient counsel.

Dershowitz claims to choose his clients when "I am pissed off by an injustice being perpetrated against the person, whether he or she may be innocent or guilty. . . . I have learned never to confuse celebrities with fascinating people, or high-profile cases with

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important ones." Unless that word "learned" is a coded apology, this is difficult to square with his involvement in the O.J. extravaganza, which seemed motivated by nothing except Dershowitz's desire to join the legal "Dream Team" and thereby cement his status as one of America's *uber*-lawyers.

Letters to a Young Lawyer has other shortcomings. Dershowitz's animus toward the Supreme Court is complete. When he whines that "there is no professional or personal gratification in arguing to a bunch of close-minded automatons," he seems to imagine that the role of the Supreme Court is to provide advocates with professional or personal gratification.

Dershowitz also gets it wrong when he generalizes about prosecutorial misconduct. Although he admits he has little experience with juries (and thus, presumably, little experience in criminal cases at the trial level), he confidently asserts that prosecutors routinely engage in suppressing evidence and suborning perjured testimony. He further accuses many defense attorneys of complicity in this wrongdoing, alleging that they regularly overlook prosecutorial misconduct in the interests of professional comity.

Anyone who has actually tried criminal cases knows that Dershowitz has it backwards. In an effort to gain a tactical advantage or preserve grounds for a potential appeal, defense attorneys routinely accuse prosecutors of every form of misconduct from discovery violations to using race to strike potential jurors. The overwhelming majority of these accusations are frivolous, made with such numbing frequency that they have become meaningless.

The weakest part of *Letters to a Young Lawyer* is the end. The brief rumination on the roots of morality is superficial, and the chapter on pluralism is a callow paean to cultural diversity.

Still, *Letters to a Young Lawyer* doesn't aspire to be a literary masterpiece. Dershowitz argues convincingly that perfectionism is an unproductive trait, in lawyers as well as academics, and he refers fondly to the "many imperfect books" he has written. This is another, but it's not without virtues. ♦

Wicca Women

Religion as narcissism.

BY CATHERINE SANDERS

Browse in any bookstore's "spirituality" section and you'll find dozens of books about Wicca and the world of modern-day witchcraft. Pink and purple covers promising "girl power" fill the teenagers' shelves, and the women's section is crammed with volumes advising women on how to look better, feel great, and have more self-esteem by finding the "goddess within."

Witchcrafting
A Spiritual Guide to Making Magic
by Phyllis Curott
Broadway Books, 304 pp., $25

One of the latest of these is Phyllis Curott's *Witchcrafting: A Spiritual Guide to Making Magic*. This is the second try for Curott, a self-styled "Wiccan high priestess" and activist. Her first book, *The Book of Shadows: A Modern Woman's Journey into the Wisdom of Witchcraft and the Magic of the Goddess*, was an attempt to explain why she, a Brown University graduate and attorney in New York, would bother with it all. Now, with *Witchcrafting*, she's written a how-to guide devoted to showing practitioners the techniques whereby they can master the craft. Chapters cover such topics as divination, spell casting, magic, the goddess, the god, potions, and tools.

Curott claims Wicca is the fastest growing religion in America, with fifty thousand followers. The numbers do not admit confirmation, but the majority involved are women who, the author insists, have finally found a religion that honors and empowers them—because Wiccans worship a female deity, the goddess. "This vibrant and authentic religion," Curott explains, is an amalgamation of Freemasonry, mythology, folk practices, nineteenth-century American pantheism, transcendentalism, feminism, Spiritualism, Buddhism, the ancient pantheon, and shamanism.

The absence of scholarly and analytical skills is probably a prerequisite for calling this jumble an "authentic religion," but Curott is singularly lacking in anything approaching critical power. What's worse, however, is that she ends up promoting—in the name of empowering women—something that is far more likely to injure women, both individually and in the culture.

Unlike some of her peers, Curott at least acknowledges that what passes for modern witchcraft, which arrived in the United States during the 1960s, bears only the remotest resemblance to ancient paganism. It derives mostly from an Englishman, Gerald Gardner, who in the late 1930s appropriated various rituals and customs, including nudity, from a local coven of witches, Indian folklore, the Masons, and the bizarre British sex practitioner Aleister Crowley. Gardner wrote several books about witchcraft and even adopted the Anglo-Saxon word for wizard, wicca, which he mistranslated to mean "wise one."

Throughout her book, Curott roundly condemns Judaism and Christianity as "patriarchal" and "oppressive." Wicca, by contrast, provides a real spiritual home for women. In the traditional revealed religions "you need rules—a Bible, and the Ten Commandments, a Torah and a Koran—that come down from some transcendent, supernatural (masculine) source," she

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writes. "You need saints to intercede on your behalf and because God is not present to consult with you. You need a church or a temple or a mosque."

As it turns out, she has a sneaking admiration for Jesus Christ, because he possessed the "feminine qualities" of tolerance, compassion, and gentleness. But Christ fails to gain her ultimate acceptance, because he was not sexually active and was "without humor." Curott says the Wiccan god, by contrast, dances.

The theodicy by which there can be a male god in the female universe is not what one would call theologically coherent, but in his male mode, the Wiccan god is erotic and can be found in nature or worshipped as Dionysius, Hermes, Zeus, Mars, or any of innumerable other pagan gods.

The sexual theme appears in her chapter on Sabbats, the Wiccan holidays. Curott instructs readers to not only dance "skyclad," but to "make love with someone you love" after returning from the maypole celebration celebrated the first day of May. "And don't forget to practice safe sex!" she cheerily adds.

You'd think that the "spirituality" of Wicca would be vitiated by the fact that even its practitioners admit that they've made it all up. But the problem here is finally not that this is all silly and incoherent. It's rather that those who practice it do so because they like toying with an evil they don't actually believe exists, which gives them the frisson of doing something wicked while promising they'll be safe doing it.

Of course, that leaves the question of whether the rest of us are safe from them. The real impossibility of Wicca as a religion is that it asks nothing lofty of its believers. There is no mention of obeying the law or loving your neighbor.

After most Wiccan rituals, women are encouraged to turn to one another and inculcate self-worship by saying, "Thou Art Goddess." History suggests that beliefs rooted in narcissism and hedonism tend to issue in nasty consequences. Don't go dancing naked around the maypole with these women. It starts silly, and it ends cruel. ♦

Film in the Fifties

Bad movies, overinterpreted.

BY DANIEL WATTENBERG

If you picked up a copy of James Harvey's last book, *Romantic Comedy in Hollywood*, you have a notion of what he prizes in movies: wit, skepticism, independence, feistiness, *joie de vivre*, mystery, and sexiness. In his new *Movie Love in the Fifties*, Harvey writes about a decade—a long decade stretching from the noir thrillers of the late 1940s to the early 1960s—in which a newly pious popular culture frowned on the qualities his previous book celebrated.

Movie Love in the Fifties
by James Harvey
Knopf, 464 pp., $35

"Movies in general in the fifties seemed to get blander and safer—like American life in general," Harvey declares. "If you had any doubt that the movies had 'lost something,' as people used to say, the late show could settle them. The wry and intelligent sort of comedy so happily rampant in the thirties had disappeared, surviving only—in a mostly ironic form—in the noir thrillers. But they weren't surviving so well either. Toughness and irreverence, those onetime Hollywood specialties, seemed to be losing out to a kind of national sanctimony."

One form of 1950s movie sanctimony was the traditional piety of flag, faith, and family that the 1960s counterculture would mock into submission. But the cultural voice of the movies in the 1950s was hardly monolithic. The crisply pressed traditionalism of the suburbs was challenged by a competing piety of reformist uplift. Stanley Kramer, Dore Schary, and others produced a cascade of liberal "message films" that sermonized against alcoholism, racial and ethnic intolerance, McCarthyism, the nuclear menace, and corrupt union bosses. These movies were no less earnest and self-satisfied than their tradition-minded alternatives.

And even that 1950s traditionalism itself was not without its ambiguities. This was the era of the sensitive and scene-stealing rebel manchild—the era of Brando, Dean, and Clift. While movies like *The Blackboard Jungle* or *The Wild One* might overtly endorse social conformity and public order, such overt meanings were susceptible to subversion by charismatic young Method actors who, as Harvey observes, made "everyone around them (especially if they were older) seem radically less authentic."

Harvey is not the kind of critic who sees movies as a pretext for opportunistic social criticism. He delights in movies for their own sake, and he favors detailed scene-by-scene, even shot-by-shot, analysis "to follow the movie as it moves and changes and makes its points in front of us." In its grid-search thoroughness, this approach matches the one he used in *Romantic Comedy*.

That book was seldom tiresome, because Harvey was writing mostly about movies he liked—and that his readers were apt to like or to think they might like. In *Movie Love in the Fifties*, applied to a much higher proportion of bad, mediocre, or forgotten movies, Harvey's fine-grained formalism feels like over-refinement. Entire chapters are devoted to painstaking analysis of movies by Robert Siodmak or Max Ophüls so obscure you won't find them on the shelves of the snobbiest specialty video store in the coolest part of

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town. Jim Jarmusch couldn't identify some of these movies if Jean-Luc Godard stood in front of him with their titles written on his forehead.

For many reasons, some touched on by Harvey, Hollywood was at an ebb in the 1950s. With the disintegration of the studio system, the patient cultivation of acting and screenwriting talent became more difficult. And Hollywood made some ill-advised responses to the challenge of television, like the flattening, wide-screen Cinemascope format, or the production of lavish historical epics and biblical pageants.

Other reasons are probably to be sought in larger-scale cultural changes. Harvey shrewdly observes that the shallow consumerism and earnest do-goodism of the Eisenhower-Stevenson decade seemed to be mirrored in movies that were either devoid of self-awareness or inflated with self-importance. The end result was too many movies either too dumb or too sanctimonious to laugh at themselves.

But Harvey appears to feel obligated to salvage some good from the decade, something commendable, coherent, and thesis-worthy. What he comes up with is the notion, hardly new, that unsung director geniuses were slyly subverting the formulaic schlock that they were being handed to direct by philistine suits at the studios. With a jump cut here and a camera hung from a ceiling there, these formalist "termite artists" were transmuting generic dross into stylized, aestheticized gold. These directors produced, Harvey claims, "almost a new kind of Hollywood movie, establishing in the climate of general decline and dwindling box-office revenues a different relation with its audience, subverting at times just those securities in the audience—the reliance on narrative logic and linearity, on psychological realism, on the invisible camera and the self-effacing filmmaker—that the classical cinema had carefully built up."

The leading exemplars of the type are Douglas Sirk (who made *Written on the Wind*, *Imitation of Life*, and other popular melodramas) and Nicholas Ray (*Rebel Without a Cause*, *Johnny Guitar*), two Hollywood journeymen now almost universally acclaimed by American film intellectuals as expressive masters unappreciated in their own time. "What the two men had most strikingly in common," writes Harvey, "was their latter-day 'rediscovery.'"

Another thing they had in common was that their movies were not very good. Both are overdue for a long interval of reneglect. An interesting study in cultural history might be written about how their reputations rose to their current heights among American movie snobs.

One reason is American intellectual self-loathing. Nobody in America seems to have "rediscovered" Ray and Sirk until the French had first. Harvey recounts how he himself found both Sirk's *Written on the Wind* and *Imitation of Life* "unredeemably bad" when he first saw them, before his eyes were retrained by the auteurists. (An irony in the docile American concurrence in the French auteurists' lionization of American journeymen is that French directors acquired such prestige among Americans in the 1950s and 1960s largely because Hollywood was making such bad movies at the time.)

"Nicholas Ray is the cinema," Godard pronounced, but it's worth noting the obvious point that these French critics spoke *French*, after all, and had little idea just how bad the dialogue and line readings were in the American movies they revered. *Imitation of Life* really has such lines as "Hold on to your dreams!" In place of dramatization and characterization, it has characters "explain" themselves, as when the sharpie agent Allen Loomis says, "I am a man of very few principles, and all of them are open to revision." There is no dramatic irony here: He is not revealing a flawed self-conception destined to be undermined by on-screen action; he is explaining how his character is to be understood by the moviegoer.

Then, too, these French critics started with the theory that the director is the true and only author of a movie—and in time-honored French intellectual style, went out in search of evidence to support their thesis. Inevitably, they were attracted to those directors and

John Gavin and Lana Turner in Imitation of Life.

movies with the most exclamatory and intrusive directorial techniques and the most idiosyncratic and conspicuous directorial signatures. To the French mind, these manifestations of directorial aesthetic intent somehow proved the artistic unity and supremacy of the directorial vision in filmmaking. But because they never realized how bad the underlying material really was, they failed to understand how powerless these supreme "authors" were to preserve their "unified" artistic visions from being fatally compromised by bad scripts, bad acting, and the like.

American critics, on the other hand, should be able to see that these American directors lacked either the personal creative juice or the authority (especially in pre-production) to save movies that were, finally, schlock meant for very broad and undiscerning audiences. Harvey argues that it is precisely the ability of these directors to redeem hackneyed content that confirms their greatness as artists. But granting (with qualifications) that both Sirk and Ray possessed a flair for visual design, does that really confirm their artistic greatness? Or does it confirm, instead, their artistic limits? Even with their considerable visual imagination and technical sophistication, these directors could do no more than elevate assembly-line tear-jerking

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kitsch into handcrafted tear-jerking kitsch. Doesn't it then follow that these directors are, finally, not great artists? Aren't they, rather, skilled and resourceful craftsmen indistinguishable from all the other highly trained and aesthetically sensitive Hollywood craftsmen—the film cutters, sound engineers, production designers, and so on—who collaborate in the production of a movie?

It may be wrong, by the way, to call the design sense of Ray and Sirk "formalist." Their pictorial arrangements and set-ups are seldom motivated by purely formal intentions. Instead of viewing the action dispassionately, their cameras tend to perceive it through the medium of their characters' emotions, and this projection of human emotion onto outside events is probably better understood as "romanticism."

Unfortunately, however, Ray and Sirk—and all the rest of the journeyman Hollywood directors of the 1950s—harnessed form to emotional content in such literal-minded ways that the effects are just plain corny. In *Imitation of Life*, for example, Lana Turner's character, a Broadway star, delivers a sort of "Who Am I? What's It All About?" soliloquy while looking at her reflection in the vanity mirror in her backstage dressing room.

Is it conceivable that such an obvious device is actually a knowing aesthetic prank? ("I had Lana do the introspection monologue in front of, get this, a mirror!") Harvey seems to imply as much. He argues, plausibly, that Sirk knew his stories were insipid. But then he goes one step further, arguing that Sirk devised a style that let his contemporary audience in on the secret that he knew he was directing trash—which permitted these audiences to, in effect, indulge their guilty pleasure in these mawkish, overdetermined sobfests on their own terms, while at the same time smirking at themselves for enjoying them.

I don't believe it for a minute. Yes, 1950s audiences could snicker at a movie that aimed too low—but with the complicity of the director? Harvey himself, recall, rendered a contemporary verdict on Sirk as "unredeemably bad," not "so bad it's actually good."

Even more far-fetched is the idea that Nicholas Ray was ironically distanced from his own movies. The problem with *Rebel Without a Cause* is not that it glorifies solipsistic, angst-ridden teens wallowing in self-pity. The problem with it is that it seems to be *directed by* a solipsistic, angst-ridden teen wallowing in self-pity. It actually makes you wish it had been directed by a pandering cynic.

A startling fact revealed in *Movie Love in the Fifties* is that the retired Sirk himself confessed that he was embarrassed by his sumptuously decorated popular melodramas of the decade. He told Harvey in one interview that he hadn't watched most of his films since he'd made them. Asked why, the German-born director answered: "Because you don't like them. Because you get depressed."

Harvey tries to write this off to Sirk's "surprising lack of egotism." Then, he tries to soften the clear—and heartbreaking—meaning of Sirk's categorical judgment: "About the films he showed some ambivalence, sounding almost dismissive." Obviously, Harvey liked and admired Douglas Sirk and means well. But he finally patronizes him: apologizing for the director's aesthetic judgment and violating his artistic dignity. In overprotecting Sirk's Hollywood output, Harvey undermines Sirk's consoling conviction that if he had enjoyed the creative control of an independent artist—instead of being a hired hand at the unapologetically anti-highbrow Universal Studios in the blah 1950s—then he would have made real masterpieces.

What is the best that can be said about Hollywood in the 1950s? Some of the greats—Ford, Hawks, Welles—were still at work and still making the occasional late career classic. Harvey writes insightfully about one, Welles's 1958 *Touch of Evil*. (Oddly, given his subject, he writes just as much about Welles's breakthrough films of the early 1940s, *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*.)

Film noir and the European directors associated with that postwar style really did expand the expressive range of film technique while preserving some of the bracingly unsentimental spirit of movies from a less pious era. Alfred Hitchcock was still in his prime, and Harvey devotes much space to *Vertigo* and *Psycho*. And Billy Wilder owned the decade, from *Sunset Boulevard* in 1950 to *The Apartment* in 1960. Harvey passes over Wilder in silence, presumably because Wilder was too literary, too opinionated about people and life, too talky to fit neatly into his thesis about the rise of postclassical cinematic formalism. And Wilder's camera, very un-postclassically, never called attention to itself.

There is finally something suspect about the whole idea of cinematic "formalism." Painting began its march toward abstraction and formalism in the second half of the nineteenth century in part because its traditional representational functions had been usurped by the new craft of photography. But cinema isn't threatened by photography. Cinema *is* photography.

In any case, in the name of this formalism, Harvey has neglected many good movies. And he has favored with his own refined connoisseurship too many bad movies. It's less than those good films—and more than the bad ones—deserve. ♦

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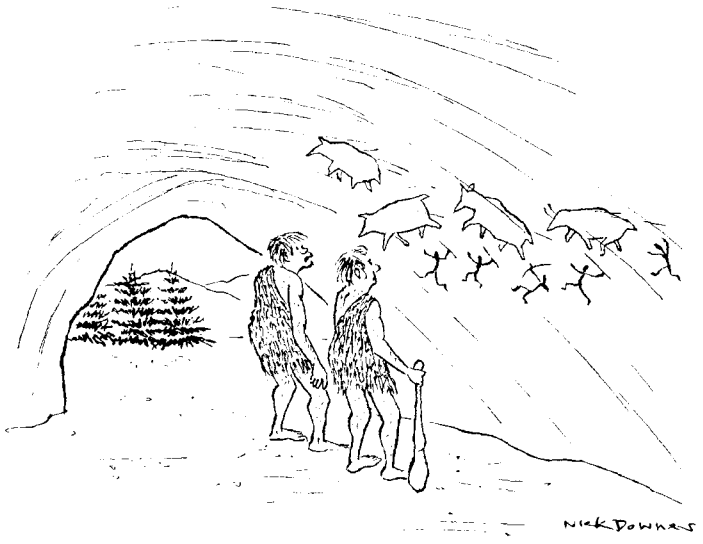
The Standard Reader



"There's so much violence in cave paintings these days."

Loony Leftists (Cont'd)

We thought perhaps the *London Review of Books* was getting better. It could hardly get worse after its Oct. 4 parade of writers denouncing America. Columbia historian Eric Foner wrote: "I'm not sure which is more frightening: the horror that engulfed New York City or the apocalyptic rhetoric emanating daily from the White House." Fredric Jameson, Edward Said, and others chimed in, with perhaps the most egregious essay by Cambridge's Mary Beard.

The Oct. 18 issue, however, printed a number of sharp replies. The most succinct came from a reader named Todd Ojala: "When I visit England sometime I'm going to stop by your offices and shove your loony leftist faces into some dog sh—t." But the most interesting was from the postmodernist literary critic Marjorie Perloff, who wrote:

> Mary Beard, writing from Cambridge, surely one of the most idyllic safe havens in the world, tells us "the United States had it coming" and this is "of course" what many people "openly or privately think." . . .

Outside the ivory gates, 95 per cent of the U.S. population evidently disagree. . . . But of course we know how spurious this "fact" is. As Jameson tells us, the people "are united by the fear of saying anything that contradicts this completely spurious media consensus." Fear, one wonders, of what? Has Jameson ever been silenced for his views?

Beard, in any case, goes on to complain about our . . . "refusal to listen to what the 'terrorists' have to say." "There are," she continues, "very few people on the planet who devise carnage for the sheer hell of it." Well, I suppose it depends on what one means by "the sheer hell of it." By analogy to terrorism, perhaps we should not have bothered with definitions of Nazism or Fascism, but should have listened to what Hitler and his friends had to say. I seem to recall that Neville Chamberlain tried just that. . . . As it turned out, after all that "listening" at Berchtesgaden, there were quite a few people on the planet who were quite happy to devise carnage "for the sheer hell of it," taking that phrase quite literally. Hell is, in any case, what transpired.

Alas, the *London Review of Books* has done little since but publish letters attacking Perloff. And Todd Ojala wrote a second time to apologize, saying, "You are in no danger of me . . . doing anything remotely violent with dog-doo." It's a shame. We were ready to buy him a ticket to London. ♦

Babblers

Meanwhile, the banner of saving a place in the world for looniness has been picked up by *Newsweek*, which carried an article in its Nov. 19 issue by David Gates defending Susan Sontag, Arundhati Roy, and Barbara Kingsolver, three novelists who've had some of the worst things to say since Sept. 11.

When Kingsolver declared the U.S. flag stood for "intimidation, censorship, violence, bigotry, sexism, and homophobia," Jonathan Alter used his column in, ah, *Newsweek* to call her "mindless." But Gates doesn't mind trashing his colleague and anyone else who thinks these writers somewhat less than informed. Gates concedes that when Roy called bin Laden "the American president's dark doppelgänger," it "crossed over into Sillyville." That's one way to put it. Another is to say it's repulsive.

Still, the article did produce one memorable line, about Gates's interview with Kingsolver: "'Well, I'm babbling,' the author of *The Poisonwood Bible* said after summarizing the essay she'd just sent to her agent about FDR's 'Four Freedoms' speech." Jonathan Alter could have told her that. ♦

Books in Brief

***The Human Embryo Research Debates* by Ronald M. Green, (Oxford University Press, 231 pp., $29.95)** Ronald Green recounts his unsuccessful struggle to obtain federal funding for destructive embryonic research as a member of the Human Embryo Research Panel in the mid 1990s. Green laments the new research "ice age" that thwarts advances and interferes with the right to reproduce. He blames the panel's failure on religious activists ("if this narrative has a villain, it is Richard Doerflinger," from the Catholic bishops' conference)

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and conservative politicians.

Green contends that since life and death are "processes," there is no line to mark a life possessing worth. And so we must be "active choosers" of which lives we will protect. It is of little concern to Green that this leads inevitably to the killing of devalued humans and their reduction to natural resources to be harvested. Indeed, he seems to welcome it—always presuming, of course, that he gets to be one of the choosers.

—*Wesley J. Smith*

***Postmodern Pooh* by Frederick Crews (North Point, 175 pp., $22)** "'Tracks,' said Piglet. 'Paw-marks.' He gave a little squeak of excitement. 'Oh, Pooh! Do you think it's a-a-a Woozle?'" No, the hunt is neither for a Woozle nor a Heffalump; it's actually Frederick Crews on the trail of postmodern theorists. Four decades ago Crews skewered academic pretensions in *The Pooh Perplex*, a casebook applying the latest interpretive methods (New Critical, Marxist, Freudian, etc.) to *Winnie the Pooh*. Now Crews imagines an MLA session in which the Best Bear in the World is deconstructed, found to be sexist and hegemonic, and moves from the mirror stage to the symbolic register. The trouble is that it hardly seems a joke any more. Of what use is parody in a world that parodies itself?

—*R.V. Young*

***Jews in American Politics* edited by L. Sandy Maisel and Ira N. Forman (Rowman & Littlefield, 512 pp., $39.95)** A useful reference volume and a highly readable contribution to political historiography, chronicling American Jewish politicians. Alongside surveys of such big topics as identity, Jewish involvement in the radical left, and the turn toward neoconservatism, the book contains a selection of short biographies and useful lists. Who remembers that the first Jewish cabinet member in America was Judah P. Benjamin, attorney general, secretary of war, and secretary of state in the Confederate administration of Jefferson Davis?

The personalities range from the early 20th-century San Francisco political boss Abe Ruef to a rising star, Virginia's first term Republican congressman Eric Cantor—not to mention everyone from the anarchist Emma Goldman to Alan Greenspan. At best, a book to have on your desk for odd moments of quiet. At worst, bin Laden's greatest nightmare.

—*Stephen Schwartz*

Book of the Week

War from the West

Victor Davis Hanson argues that as we fight, so we are. BY J. BOTTUM

Carnage and Culture: Landmark Battles in the Rise of Western Power by Victor Davis Hanson (Doubleday, 492 pp., $29.95)

As the Taliban retreat and America considers what comes next, it's worth reading Victor Davis Hanson's excellent *Carnage and Culture*, an account of nine landmark battles between the West and other cultures.

A classicist at California State, Fresno, Hanson suggested in his 1989 *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece* that the discovery of the effectiveness of tight-packed phalanxes of infantry forced upon the ancient Greek cities what has become the paradigm of Western war: decisive battle, maximum force, and the attempt to obliterate enemy armies.

In *Carnage and Culture*, Hanson explains what it takes to get men to fight this way. The unaristocratic phalanx required ordinary people to accept military duties, which required shared political power, which required rational habits of mind, which required that war be decisive. The Western way of war produced Western politics, philosophy, and science, while Western politics, philosophy, and science were busy producing the Western way of war.

We forget, for instance, that the Romans weren't all that skilled at battle. They sometimes had a Scipio or a Caesar. But a real tactical genius like Hannibal destroyed nearly 50,000 of them in one afternoon at Cannae. And then the Carthaginians settled down for the winter, while the Romans raised another legion—and another, and another. The Romans were *political* genuises, and against that, Hannibal had no chance. They knew how to make soldiers out of citizens, how to fight together, and how to push on to strategic victory. Most of all, they knew *Carthago delenda est*.

It's this bringing of massive force to a brutal point that fascinates Hanson. It's what makes him insist, in his account of the Zulus' attack on Rorke's Drift, that the greatest fighters in Africa were pale, scrawny Victorians from the London slums. They weren't the most skilled; they were merely the deadliest, because they were well-disciplined members of an army from a culture that insisted on the lethalness of war. The Persians were defeated at Salamis by Western politics, the Aztecs at Tenochtitlán by Western technology, the Ottomans at Lepanto by Western economics, and the Japanese at Midway by the creativeness of Western individualism.

Or so Hanson claims: What we are makes us fight this way, and fighting this way makes us what we are. To battle otherwise—to practice the "flower war" of the Aztecs, or the self-doubting war Hanson describes in his chapter on the Tet Offensive, or even the gestured wars of the Clinton era—strikes not just at Western military doctrine. It also weakens the very Western culture we mean it to defend. ♦

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THE WASHINGTON POST THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2001 A23

Robert D. Novak

Prince of Darkness at Noon

Striped-pants careerists at the State Department are pushing the United States to install a multi-ethnic federation in place of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, but patriots are rallying to thwart their plans. In fact, a top secret meeting, which included several Washington insiders with close ties to the Bush administration, was held Tuesday to lay the groundwork for a much bolder solution: a supply-side Islamist regime under the leadership of a new spiritual guide, Ayatollah Wanniski.

Participants at this meeting, which included such proven visionaries as Jack Kemp, Bret Schundler and former University of Maryland basketball coach Lefty Driesell, are adamant that the next regime in Afghanistan must reject the ruinous monetary policies of Alan Greenspan and instead tie the Afghan currency, the fitwid, to gold—or to a basket of commodities at the very least. In an interview on the CNN television program "Evans, Novak, Hunt, Shields, Gigot, Broder, Huffington, Carlson, Press, Lofton, Sobran and Kaczynski" (which airs on CNN Saturdays at 6 p.m.), respected Islamic leader Louis Farrakhan insisted that the next Afghan regime must be led by someone who is strongly pro-Muslim, and endorsed Mohammed Yasser Fatwa Wanniski (formerly Jude) as a prime candidate who could restore the prominence of *sharia*, or holy law, while reducing the Afghan capital gains tax rate. Shares on the main Afghan exchange surged on the news, with the prime index, the Kabul Industrial Average, finishing the day of trading at 1, up from 0, where the index had languished for the previous 19 centuries.

In a closed-door meeting with Treasury Secretary-in-waiting Lawrence Lindsey, Wanniski pledged himself to a platform of term limits (he would serve no more than 4 jihads) and a foreign policy aimed at upholding the principles of the late Roberto D'Aubuisson of El Salvador, aka "Jack Kemp with a gun." "If you are going to have death squads, they might as well be right-wing death squads," Ayatollah Wanniski told this journalist during a top secret television interview on *Knee to Knee with Robert Novak* (which used to appear on the Empowerment Television Network, then on the Renaissance Network, and is now being considered for a coveted spot on Al Jazeera).

Wanniski, who also endorsed zero tax rates on all Corvette purchases, then met with the most brilliant man on the face of the earth, Karl Rove. Mr. Rove, who cuts a dashing figure in Washington with his lithe figure and his piercing blue eyes, agreed that *The McLaughlin Group* isn't nearly the show it was when a certain Prince of Darkness roamed the set and further declared that McLaughlin himself is a total pr***.

Sources close to the meeting report that Mr. Rove acknowledged that America remains threatened, even after the fall of the Taliban, chiefly because of the fact that Richard Darman is still permitted to walk the streets as a free man, instead of being convicted of treason and locked away in a rat-infested prison. Meanwhile, elsewhere in the world, the state of Israel continued its long-standing effort to lure the United States into conflicts in parts of the world where it has no national interests (such as lower Manhattan) and the weak-kneed nancy boys in the Republican caucus continued to cave in to porkbarrel spending pressures from Richard Gephardt, while neglecting legitimate national concerns, such as full funding for federal programs to insure strategically located summer homes in shoreline areas such as Fenwick Island, Delaware.

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Battered America

Jennifer Roback Morse is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

The message of the Blame America Firsters, at home and abroad, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, is that "America had it coming."

This is not a time for self-indictment. This is a time for self-defense. Everyone has a natural right to self-defense. We do not have to prove that we are perfect before we have the right to protect ourselves. Consider a woman who staggers into a neighbor's house, her face bruised, nose bleeding, clothes torn. She tells her neighbor that her husband has beaten her, only to be told, "Those are horrific injuries. You must have really provoked him to make him do a thing like that." This is the message of the Blame America First crowd. To defend oneself, a woman or a nation needs to believe that she has a right to live, without continually apologizing for her existence.

You may reply that the analogy between national self-protection and protection against domestic violence doesn't work. The battered wife should not retaliate privately. She should call the police, get a restraining order, set the wheels of the criminal justice system into motion, rather than resort to violence herself.

This response misses the point: **The police and criminal justice system rely on violence to keep social peace.** Criminals rarely volunteer to go to prison or even to trial. The police must use force to apprehend and detain them. This organized use of violence in society helps minimize the random violence of domestic assault and other crimes.

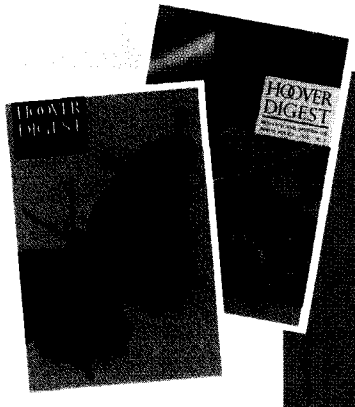
In international affairs, military action can contribute to the deterrence of crime and the apprehension of criminals. **It is not good enough to say that we ought to rely solely on the international courts.** Osama bin Laden is already under indictment for the bombings of U.S. embassies. Indictments by themselves do not serve justice unless the criminal is actually captured and brought to trial.

It is not unusual for a battered woman to make excuses for the abuser. "I really did nag him. I really did burn dinner. He really did have reason to complain." Counselors at battered women's shelters patiently explain that she is entitled to be safe in her own home. She does not have to be perfect in order to protect herself. The perpetrator's "reasons" for the battering are not reasons at all but excuses. Battered women's shelters are full of women who secretly or not so secretly believe that they deserved the punishment they received at the hands of their abusers.

Some of America's critics are comparable to a neighbor who says, "Just clean yourself up, go on home and fix him his favorite dinner. He will treat you right if you just shape up." If she ends up battered again, that irresponsible neighbor bears some of the accountability. So too, will the Blame America First crowd bear some responsibility for the consequences of draining our will to defend ourselves.

— Jennifer Roback Morse

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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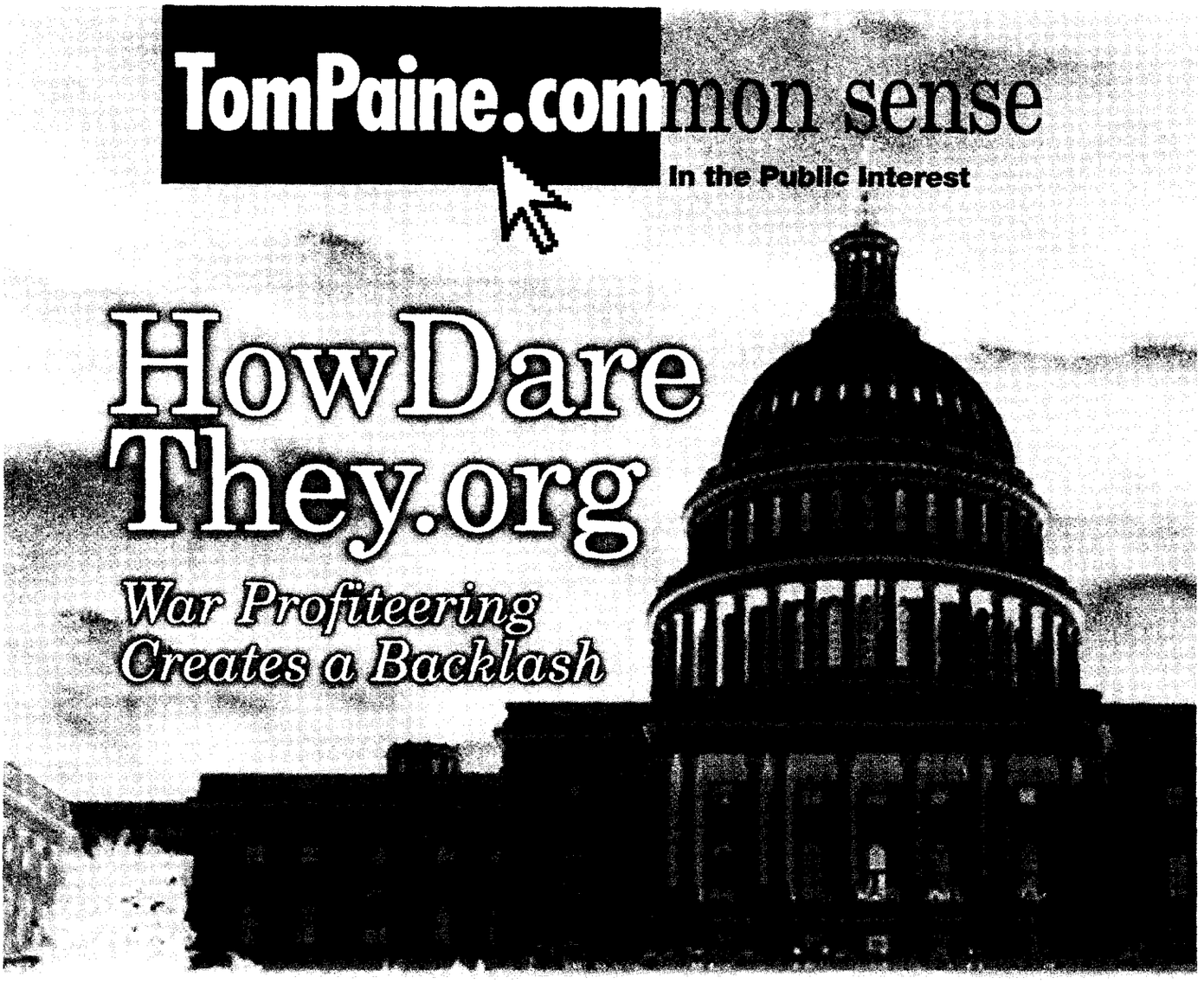

"It's amazing how the Republicans go out of their way to prove they are the party of rich folks and corporations," a senior Democratic Party official, quoted in the *New York Times*, said of the GOP's "economic stimulus" package.

That's not just partisan spin. The GOP proposal is so larded with giveaways to political patrons, so counter to economic common sense and genuine national interest, it's proven an easy target for ridicule. Ditto the GOP energy plan – another pre-9/11 agenda wrapped in post-9/11 urgency.

Such wartime profiteering is creating a backlash as Americans comprehend it, and the Democrats see an opportunity – use populist rhetoric to encourage that nascent anger.

A reasonable tactic, but an ironic one. The Democrats' populist credibility is a little thin. Years ago they began trading it for the chance to attract big campaign donors, many of whom also feed the GOP.

Now Democrats have difficulty defending the little guy. Witness their weak opposition to Bush's feed-the-rich tax cuts or their complicity in the airline bailout. On energy, they oppose oil drilling in the Arctic. But note their unwillingness to champion a bold alternative – an "All-American Energy Act" to rapidly boost home-grown renewable power and the jobs, self-reliance and security that go with it. How could Democrats ignore such a populist plum? They need energy industry contributions, too.

The people are without a party. Their anger must seek other outlets – and there are signs of a backlash. Like one hundred low-income community leaders protesting the stimulus and energy bills at the Capitol. **HowDareThey.org** is another.

"Congress and the White House are violating the post-9/11 ethos of shared sacrifice so blatantly, I just felt we had to say, 'How dare they?'" says Micah Sifry, a writer for Public Campaign and author of a forthcoming book on third-party politics. His idea: **HowDareThey.org.**

"This is about small-'d' democratic opposition to the power of big-money donors in national politics," Sifry says. "I hope it's a rallying point for people who think public servants ought to represent them, too."

TomPaine.com – Profiteering Creates a Backlash
Featuring "Dems Duck and Cover" by Kevin Reikes... "Needed: Aggressive Progressives" by John Nichols... "A Rich Return on Investment" tracks campaign cash behind the 'stimulus'... and a Q&A on the founding of ***HowDareThey.org****.*

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